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Hello, mayor: President thanks 31 Iloilo leaders

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
 PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—"Hello, Mayor?"
 A very friendly President Macapagal-Arroyo, apparently unconcerned about being bugged,
 HELLO/ A6



Thursday, July 21, 2005 *** 38 pages / 3 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 225 P18

Fil-Am actress files raps vs 5-star Makati hotel

By Veronica Uy
 INQ7.net

FILIPINO-AMERICAN actress Giovannie Pico and her family have filed a complaint with the Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA) against the Manila Peninsula Hotel, PTA general manager Robert Dean Barbers said.

FIL-AM/ A15

website: www.inq7.net

Reds scrap peace talks

NDF to wait until 'next administration'

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE COMMUNIST-LED National Democratic Front has closed the door to peace talks with the "crumbling" administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, saying it would rather wait for a new government.

Luis Jalandoni, chief negotiator of the Utrecht-based NDF panel, said there was no point in resuming peace talks with the Arroyo administration because it was "not going to last very long."

Besides supporting the "ouster" of Ms Ar-

royo and her constitutional successor Vice President Noli de Castro, the NDF is backing the setting up of a "transitional governing council" that would call for new elections within six months, Jalandoni said.

"The administration of GMA is going down so what maybe the next administration will be in a better position to attend to the peace process. There can be no meaningful peace talks with this administration," he told the INQUIRER by phone from Utrecht.

"After this administration is replaced, then we can iron out the kinks in the peace talks," Jalandoni said.

The NDF has been holding peace talks on and off with the government since 1986, starting with the administration of former President Corazon Aquino. The talks had

REDS SCRAP/ A15



SOMEWHERE in Mindanao, guerrillas of the New People's Army are still up in arms.

FOI PHOTO

It's still 'House of JDV' but blood may spill in Senate

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE POLITICAL chaos engulfing the Arroyo presidency is expected to spill over to the halls of the Senate and the House of Representatives once both houses of Congress resume sessions on Monday.

Administration lawmakers yesterday

admitted that it would not be a walk in the park for the majority in Congress since a major reorganization or formal realignment of political forces is in the offing following the adverse positions taken by several political parties comprising the administration coalition.

Although Speaker Jose de Venecia,

along with his Lakas-CMD party, "is solid as a rock," the opposition might wrest control of the Senate presidency, Surigao del Norte Rep. Robert Ace Barbers predicted.

"Blood will be spilled on the Senate floor," said Barbers, noting that the Liberal Party faction of Senate President Franklin Drilon, Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan

and Rodolfo Biazon had already severed ties with Malacañang following the resignation of the so-called "Hyatt 10" from the Cabinet of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Prior to the "Hello Garci" tape scandal, there were nine opposition senators while 14 belonged to the administra-

IT'S STILL/ A15

Opposition vows to rain on Gloria's Sona parade

By Philip C. Tubeza
 and Michael Lim Ubac

"WE'RE GOING to rain on her parade." While President Macapagal-Arroyo is busy preparing her State of the Nation Address before Congress on July 25, opposition lawmakers are firming up their impeachment charges and they plan to file their case against her on the same day.

San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora and Iloilo Rep. Rolox Suplico said the opposition would file on Monday morning its amendments to the impeachment complaint that lawyer Oliver Lozano filed earlier.

"We're going to file it first thing in the morning. This will be a very clear political statement that on the day that she's going to deliver her Sona, we're going to rain on her parade," said Zamora, the opposition's lead prosecutor.

Zamora said that the charges against the President would cover "almost all" the grounds for impeachment—culpable violation of the Constitution, betrayal of public trust, treason, bribery, graft and corruption, and other high crimes.

The charges, however, are expected to center on Ms Arroyo's alleged wiretapped phone conversation with former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcil-

OPPOSITION/ A15

TOP OF THE HEAP

From shanty to skyscraper

By Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

VIRAC, Catanduanes—A daily regimen of four to five hours of rigorous study on weekdays and 12 hours more on weekends the past two years paid off big for Ruben Quintal Jr.

The 22-year-old son of a laundrywoman and a billiards spotter topped the May board examinations for civil engineers, with a grade of 98.25 percent.

Only 36 percent, or 1,151 of the 3,218 examinees, passed the tests.

"Ung hayahay kang pagmati ko. Bagi akong sa heaven (I felt so light as though I was in heaven)," said Quintal's father, Ruben Sr., describing the moment he learned about

his son's achievement.

His mother Berly was washing clothes when she heard the news. "Naugma ako ning gulpi. Bagi akong atakihun ning high blood (I was so happy I thought I would suffer hypertension)," she said in a hut she calls home on the boulevard in Barangay San Pablo.

Berly, a high school graduate, earns P150 to P200 a day washing and ironing clothes three to four times a week. Her husband, a high school dropout, earns P50 to P100 a day as a spotter at Ilawod Billiard Center near the town market.

Now that her son is a civil engineer, Berly feels her life will change for the better. "Iyo, baging namati mi na maangat-angat kami ning diit (Yes, we can feel that our lives will improve even a little bit)," she said.

FROM SHANTY/ A6



GOOD COMES OUT OF CATANDUANES.

Before he topped the civil engineering board exams, Ruben Quintal Jr. (inset) lived in Virac; now he works as a quantity surveyor holding office on the 17th floor of the Philamlife Tower on Paseo de Roxas in Makati. His climb up the corporate ladder has begun.

RYAN LIM



Virac state college has produced many topnotchers

By Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

VIRAC, Catanduanes—The Catanduanes State Colleges (CSC) must be doing something right because it has produced board topnotchers.

Its latest graduate to top the board examination is Ruben Quintal Jr., who obtained a grade of 98.25 per-

cent in the May 2005 licensure test for civil engineering. Another graduate, Edwin Ogerio of Caramoran town, made the feat in 1992.

Also belonging to a select group of graduates who landed in the Magic 20 of the board exams for civil engineering are Mary Ann Tranqueña (11th place, 2004), Vicente Tayam (19th place,

2002), Christopher Yuga (9th place, 2001), Ananias Fernandez Jr. (15th place, 2001), Aldrin Tapel (17th place, 1998) and Richard Tabuzo (19th place, 1997).

Still another graduate, Carlo Magno Guerrero, placed second in the board exams for geodetic engineering in 1996. Two others, Hazel Boragay and Manuel

Zuniega Jr., were No. 4 in the 1993 and 1992 exams, respectively.

A few alumni have been among the Top 20 in the nursing and midwifery licensure tests.

"There's no need to study outside the province if one is taking up civil engineering or nursing. Study at the

VIRAC/ A6

Lawmakers paint grim Sona scenario

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

DEPENDING on their affiliation, senators expect President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address on Monday either to be a roadmap for saving the country from chaos or to be a list of anomalies.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, a member of the Liberal Party, which has called on Ms Arroyo to resign, said he would like to hear Ms Arroyo's plans to address the problems and how she can implement her programs "in light of the current political controversy that has seriously damaged the President's capacity to govern."

He said the controversy had deeply divided the nation.

"Political parties are divided. The Cabinet is divided. The business sector is evidently divided. Civil society and other socio-political forces are also divided. Even the Church is divided," Biazon said.

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson said

LAWMAKERS/ A6



WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Western Luzon and Palawan will experience monsoon rains while the rest of Luzon and the rest of Visayas will be mostly cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Mindanao will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with rainshowers and thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY CYRIL L. BONABENTE, POINTESEARCH/07/21/05 SOURCE: PAGASA

Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Metro Manila Rains	Halo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laeng Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

No tax trial yet? Blame BIR - DOJ

By Armand Nocom

TOP justice department officials yesterday took umbrage at resigned Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima's taking to Malacañang his claim that none of the complaints filed by the finance department's Run After Tax Evaders (RATE) program have made it to court in the five months since the RATE started.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the reason why the complaints have not made it to the courts was that they were filed in a haphazard manner and wondered whether the RATE program was just "all for show."

The RATE, an intensified tax-evasion program launched last March, has set out to file charges against high-profile tax delinquents every week.

Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuno blamed the delay on the fact that the evidence in some of the cases were not complete or lawyers from the Bureau of Internal Revenue do not appear during preliminary investigations at the Department of Justice.

In a letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo before he resigned last week, Purisima complained of the delay and said the finance department might just decide to file the tax evasion cases before the Court of Tax Appeals or the local courts.

"It's their fault. They keep on filing motions to reopen the case even if it is already up for resolution," said Zuno, citing the RATE's case against popular singer Regine Velasquez.

He said motions to reopen the case were being filed because the BIR wants to "present additional documentary evidence."

"Why are they filing these cases if they lack the evidence?" asked Zuno.

He reminded the BIR that the DOJ's role was "neutral," its duty being to merely evaluate the cases and hold a preliminary investigation to determine whether the cases should be dismissed or filed in court if warranted by the evidence.

He said the DOJ cannot be counted on to gather evidence for the BIR.

"We are not engaged in case build-up," Zuno said.

He said it was not that the RATE cases were weak, merely that they were "not sufficient in documentary evidence."

But he said the DOJ was speeding up the resolution of some of the cases and would file them in court starting next week.

A ranking BIR official said the requirement to file the cases with the DOJ could be done away with as the National Internal Revenue Code empowers the BIR to file tax evasion cases directly with the courts.

Tax evasion cases worth less than P1 million are filed either with municipal, metropolitan or regional trial courts, while those involving at least P1 million are filed with the Court of Tax Appeals.

The BIR official explained that both the DOJ and fiscal authorities were undergoing a learning process in the handling of criminal cases involving tax evasion.

While DOJ lawyers have yet to fully master the handling of relatively complex tax-related cases, the DOJ and BIR officials are also undergoing training in building criminal cases, the official said.

Before the RATE program, most tax-related cases pursued by the DOJ and the BIR were civil in nature. This was because previously the government was inclined to drop criminal charges when the respondents decided to pay the disputed taxes. With a report from Michelle V. Remo

GMA: Total war on drugs



IN HANDCUFFS, suspected drug lord Calvin Tan is brought to Malacañang for presentation to the media yesterday, a day after he was extradited from Hong Kong on drug charges. EDWIN BACASMAS

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said the government's success in getting suspected drug lord Calvin Tan extradited from Hong Kong showed its determination in its fight against illegal drugs.

"We are totally committed to the war against drugs and other syndicates," the President said yesterday when Tan was presented to her in Malacañang.

"We probably have been able to reduce the drug traffic by half by now, but there's still a long way to go," she said.

Tan, who is alleged to be the head of a syndicate that ran one of southeast Asia's largest secret drug laboratories in Cebu's Mandaue City, arrived from Hong Kong late Tuesday after the Hong Kong government extradited him to face capital charges in Manila.

The President thanked authorities as well as congressmen led by Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco for pursuing the extradition of Tan, a permanent resident of Macau but who was charged last year for drug trafficking in Mandaue.

Ms Arroyo pointed out that Cuenco, author of the Dangerous Drugs Act, went nine times to Hong Kong to pursue Tan's extradition.

According to a statement from Cuenco, Tan had completed a nine-month imprisonment following his arrest in September 2004 in Hong Kong for possession of illegal drugs.

Cuenco said that if Tan were to be found guilty of charges

against him and given the maximum penalty of death, the President would not carry out the sentence.

"The President signed an undertaking that in the event the courts in the Philippines will impose the supreme penalty of death, that she will not carry it out," Cuenco told reporters.

He said this was in keeping with the extradition treaty with Hong Kong.

Anselmo Avenida, head of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency, said Tan's extradition was "a signal that drug syndicates can't just hide anywhere anymore because many countries are now cooperating in the battle against illegal drugs."

The illegal drug laboratory in Mandaue was raided by authorities with the help of the United States Drug Enforcement Agency last September.

Police seized 675 kg of methamphetamine worth P1.3 billion and arrested 11 people, including foreigners.

Avenida said at the time that there were enough chemicals in the lab to produce another 7.5 tons of methamphetamine hydrochloride, locally called shabu, worth P15 billion.

Seized documents and witnesses later pointed to Tan as one of the alleged syndicate leaders.

China is the main source of shabu's chemical ingredients which are smuggled into the Philippines and often manufactured into shabu by Chinese citizens. Christine Avendaño and AP

Protestant churches hit RP human rights record

By DJ Yap and Christian V. Esguerra

FOR a full minute, the nine-year-old boy could not speak. But when the words finally came, so did the tears.

The soldiers had told him to start digging his own grave with his bare hands. They might as well kill him now, since he would probably join the New People's Army, anyway.

It was an empty threat: The boy was later freed. But the trauma has remained weeks after that ordeal.

The boy's experience under the hands of the military was just one of several human rights abuses recorded by a group of visiting protestant church leaders in the small Manobo community of Han-ayan in Lianga, Surigao del Sur.

Thirteen protestant bishops from the US, Australia, Canada, Japan, Germany and four other countries were in the country from July 15 to 20 on the invitation of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines to document human rights abuses against church workers, lawyers, activists and journalists.

They represented the Geneva-based World Council of Churches, an organization of 347 churches; and the Christian Conference of Asia, an organization of 116 churches.

The fact-finding mission sent teams to Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac, Eastern Visayas and Surigao.

Their finding was the same everywhere: "Large scale human rights violations including police and military intimidation, illegal deten-

tion, and torture of peasants working on the farms of rich landlords are being perpetrated."

In a statement, the delegation urged the government "to put an immediate end to the pattern of killings that, for many Filipinos, are reminiscent of the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship."

The delegation urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to order an impartial investigation of the killings and ensure the safety of civilians.

"We demand justice for all victims of massive human rights violations and desecration of human lives under the Arroyo watch," Sharon Ruiz-Duremdes, NCCP general secretary said.

The NCCP said the "wave of killings of peace advocates in the Philippines including church people have become a cause for alarm among prominent international church leaders and organizations."

The Rev. Stephen Sprecher from the United Methodist Church in the US said in some way, the Arroyo administration should be held accountable for the increase in human rights violations.

The human rights group Karapatan Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights said 411 people have been killed through summary executions, assassinations, massacres since Ms Arroyo took office in January 2001 up to the present. Karapatan documented 97 cases of frustrated killings and 56 cases of "enforced disappearances."

There were 139 torture cases involving 245 individuals, while cases of illegal arrests numbered 406, involving 1,563 people, according to Karapatan.

Comelec at a loss on Garci

THE COMMISSION on Elections said it has yet to begin its investigation of the "Glorigate" scandal involving former Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano because it does not know how to proceed with it.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said the commissioners and the poll body's legal department were still discussing the elements of the case, such as the evidence to be used and exactly what the investigation would seek to uncover.

Abalos said a major hurdle was the use of the audiotapes containing the alleged wiretapped conversations between the President and Garcillano concerning last year's elections.

Comelec sources also said the poll body's legal staff was hesitant about participating in

the probe because of its controversial nature. The head of the legal department was himself mentioned in the tapes.

Abalos said the tapes' authenticity has to be established first and the identities of the voices in it confirmed.

"Evidence that is illegally sourced cannot be used as evidence. But I told [the law department] that we are proceeding on a different angle, so we will just take our cue from these tapes and then proceed with the investigation," he said.

But referring to the tapes in the course of the investigation would be difficult as long as their authenticity and the legality of their use are not settled, Abalos said. Jerome Aning

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US sending temporary ambassador to RP while waiting for new appointee

THE UNITED States is sending an interim ambassador to the Philippines, the country's ambassador to the US said yesterday.

Ambassador Albert del Rosario confirmed reports that ranking US

diplomat Darryl Johnson will be arriving in Manila this month in an "acting capacity" as the top US representative to the Philippines.

Del Rosario said this was being done apparently because "the (the US)

want to respect the importance of their relationship with the Philippines."

In a press conference held at the Department of Foreign Affairs, Del Rosario explained that "the ambassador that has been selected to rep-

resent the US to the Philippines is still at her (old) post and it will take maybe two to three months for her to complete the process to come to the Philippines."

He said the US probably felt that

would be too long not to have a senior diplomat in the Philippines. He said Johnson, whom he described as "a very good senior ambassador," has just retired from his last assignment in Thailand and has accepted

the temporary assignment.

Del Rosario did not name the newly appointed US ambassador but reports identified her as Kristie Anne Kenney, who is the current US ambassador to Ecuador.

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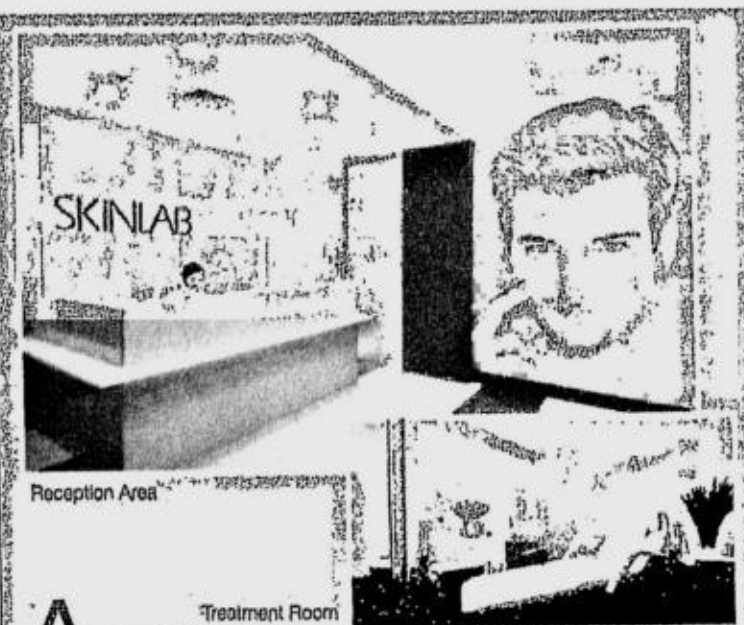
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A man's face is his passport to a successful career and social life. Men have realized that possessing good looks gives the edge in winning the approval of the opposite sex, peers and colleagues. That's why men now devote regular attention to their face and skin like they do to their sports and hobbies.

While men have become more and more conscious of their looks, there is still a scarcity of places where they can go for professional skincare. It's about time men had their own skincare center where they can relax. Enjoy skin treatments amidst a masculine ambience. Experience expert personal care that works exclusively for men.

Thus, SkinLab, a division of the Facial Care Centre, was introduced. To serve the needs of men in a specialized gentleman's center that has world-class facilities and

technologically advanced treatments that provide solutions to skin concerns uniquely their own.

SkinLab consultant Ms. Mico Calubayan explains, "Men's skin is different from women's. Because of testosterone, the dominant male hormone, their skin secretes more oil making it oilier, thicker, acidic and more prone to acne and blemishes. They also experience other problems like having delicate skin from daily shaving. Their skin also ages differently from women's. This is why it needs a different kind of skincare."

With this in mind, SkinLab developed a line of exclusive treatments for men's skin problems. According to Mico, a must-try signature treatment is the Shi-Zen D-Tox, a premium facial-and-massage therapy that works to relieve skin fatigue. Because of stress, pollution, smoking and active lifestyle plus the lack of a thorough skincare regimen, men's skin is less protected against these aggressors. She adds, "Shi-Zen is a detoxification system that uses the art of Shiatsu to correct dysfunction. It repairs rough and dry texture, promotes firmness and clarity, and prevents further skin damage. The massage part of the treatment rejuvenates the senses and improves well-being. It's a multi-functional de-stressing and skin purifying treatment in one."

Another favorite treatment among men is Diamond Peel. SkinLab consultants recommend this non-invasive exfoliation treatment for the removal of acne scars, blemishes, age spots and minor skin pigmentations. Immediately after the third session, men can expect clearer and smoother skin texture as well as more even skin tone.

Uli Behringer, chairman of Behringer Philippines, is extremely satisfied with the caliber of SkinLab treatments and top-rate quality of service. He was first prompted to get a

permanent solution for his heavy beard. "The main problem was that I had to shave twice a day. My beard grew back so fast and I obviously had all those shaving-related problems like ingrown hair and pimples. I was just tired of shaving." He worded it so aptly that you can just think of what other men with the problem of excessive, unwanted hair go through because of the laborious method of shaving. "When you have a strong beard, first you have to take a shower to soften your skin and the beard so you can shave. If you don't do that, you basically start to bleed and it's really annoying. Only removing the hair permanently will solve the problem." His friend thought he just had to try LaserLight, SkinLab's permanent hair reduction treatment.

After his LaserLight programme, he now vouches for its effect on his skin and overall appearance. "As simple as it is, I don't have to shave anymore. It's just a GREAT relief. I feel like I'm clean-shaven the whole day, the whole night. I'm just happy that I don't have to spend the time or bear with the hassle of shaving. It's permanent!"

Uli juggles his time and energy between a big company and indulging in diverse sports and hobbies such as squash, volleyball, soccer and swimming. He enjoys the rigors of work as well as the great outdoors yet absolutely no sign of stress or skin damage shows on his face. Aside from a high-fiber diet, he maintains the vitality, smoothness and youthfulness of his skin by having regular Diamond Peel, Firming Facial and Collagen Mask treatments at SkinLab. "I find it great. I'm actually happy with the quality of the staff and their service. It's the best thing I've ever done in my life."

Aside from professional skincare, men can be guaranteed of first-rate facilities. The center's interior which reflects the refinements of urban class will definitely pass the meticulous standards of today's modern man. SkinLab has pioneered a no-nonsense approach to serve what men want and what men need. It's not about vanity. It's about being a man and having it all - looks, confidence and the rewards that come along with them. Call the SkinLab now at 813-7959.



Shi-Zen D-Tox Treatment



Diamond Peel Treatment



Uli Behringer

Noli to keep Cabinet posts

By Cynthia D. Balana

VICE President Noli de Castro will continue to be the country's housing czar, the presidential adviser on Filipinos abroad, and the price monitoring chief. President Macapagal-Arroyo rejected his courtesy resignation in view of the current political crisis, De Castro said.

In an interview with the INQUIRER yesterday, De Castro said the President told him on the day he submitted his courtesy resignation that she was retaining him as chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), alternate chair of the Anti-Poverty Commission, Presidential Adviser on OFWs and Presidential Adviser on Price Monitoring.

De Castro immediately doused rumors that he would replace Corazon "Dinky" Soliman, who resigned as Social Welfare secretary, along with nine other Cabinet officials.

The President had asked all Cabinet members to tender their courtesy resignation to give her a free hand to reshuffle the Cabinet.

Reports said the DSWD portfolio had been the original position promised by Ms Arroyo to De Castro as early as 2004 when the latter agreed to be her running mate in the presidential elections.

But when the President was about to fulfill her promise to De Castro last year, Soliman cried in a press conference, saying she did not want the office to be occupied by a political person. As a result, De Castro stepped back.

De Castro admitted that it would not be wise for him to replace Soliman at this time as this could ignite the current political tension and worsen the leadership crisis.

"It is not true that I'm going to the DSWD. The people there might be demoralized. So I will just focus on my work in the HUDCC and continue the programs that I've started here," De Castro stressed.

He also said that as far as he knew, only those who resigned from the Cabinet would be replaced. The rest, he said, would be retained in their positions.

De Castro likewise said that he had refrained from commenting on the issues affecting the President to avoid being branded as an opportunist. He said he would

rather serve as vice president until his term expires in 2010.

On the President's formation of a "Truth Commission" to look into her alleged improprieties as Chief Executive, De Castro said he was not sure about the legality of this commission.

"But I just hope that the President would appoint people of integrity so that she would regain the trust of those who distrust her," De Castro said.

He said that while former President Corazon Aquino would be a good choice to head the commission, her stand calling for the President's resignation would definitely bar her from being a part of it.

"We still have many people of integrity. I'm sure the President will find them," he said.

Loren to present experts in protest

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER Senator Loren Legarda will present two documents experts to the Supreme Court, sitting as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET), to bolster her allegations in her election protest that she was cheated in the 2004 vice presidential contest.

Legarda said the experts would prove that the election documents in some provinces which she contested in her election protest were "spurious and pre-fabricated."

She said the findings of these two experts, whom she refused to name, jibed with the claim of former Senator John Osmeña of a massive fraud in the 2004 elections, particularly in Cebu where Ms Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro won.

Senator Osmeña's revelation that the administration cheated massively in Cebu bolstered our position that Noli de Castro could not have possibly won in Cebu, and by an implausible 800,000-vote margin at that," Legarda said.

In the 35-page brief which she submitted to the PET, Legarda said she had witnesses

who can pinpoint spurious election documents and establish a clear pattern of vote-shaving and padding (dagdag-bawas) in favor of De Castro.

On Monday, Legarda showed journalists samples of election returns (ERs) from Angeles City and Mandaue City, which, a handwriting expert said, were obviously prepared by only one person though the two places mentioned were miles apart from each other.

"What these falsified ERs show us is that those who masterminded this fraud have already pre-fabricated ERs, and possibly statement of votes (SOVs) and certificates of canvass (COCs), even before the people trooped to polling places in May 2004," she stressed.

Osmeña declared that he discovered through the help of document experts that President Arroyo's votes were padded by 400,000 in Cebu. To which Legarda remarked: "Since evidence show that fraud was done to benefit the administration tandem, it would be easy to surmise that my rival's votes could have been padded also by 400,000."

BUKAS NA LIHAM PARA KAY PANGULONG GMA

Kami po ay kumakatawan sa **Samahang Ilaw ng Tahanan, Inc. (SITI)**, isang asosasyon ng mga maralitang taga-lungsod na mayroong mahigit sa anim na libong (6,000) mga miyembro sa buong bansa na pawang may mga pagkakautang sa National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC), bukod sa 40,000 pang mga pamilya na katulad naming maralita na maaari ring makinabang sa programang aming isinusulong.

- Kami po ay humingi ng tulong sa NHMFC sa pamamagitan ng isang liham na kumakatawan sa amin noong Marso 17, 2005.

- Iprinisinta po ni Atty. Fermin Arzaga, na Executive Vice President ng NHMFC, sa Board ng NHMFC ang aming mungkahi para sa pagsasaayos ng aming pagkakautang noong Abril 22, 2005, na inaprubahan naman ng NHMFC Board, sa pangunguna ni Kagalang-galang na Bise Presidente Noli De Castro, ang **"Special Restructuring Program."**

- Subalit noong Hulyo 14, 2005 ay ipinahinto po ni Atty. Arzaga, na ngayon ay tumatayong OIC ng NHMFC, ang pagbabayad ng aming mga miyembro sa nasabing ahensiya sa pamamagitan ng Office Order No. 1708.

- Bakit po tinatanggihan ng bagong pamunuan ng NHMFC ang aming hangaring makapagbayad sa aming naiwang pagkakautang?

- Bakit po hinahadlangan ni OIC Atty. Arzaga na makapangolekta ang NHMFC, samantalang lubhang nangangailangan ang ating gobyerno ng pondong pangtustos sa mga proyekto at programa nito?

Hinihiling po namin sa inyo, mahal na Pangulo, na sana ay payagan kaming maipagpatuloy ang aming pagbabayad sa NHMFC sa ilalim ng Board-approved **"Special Restructuring Program."**

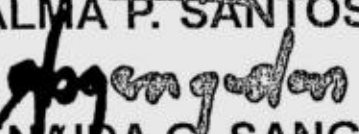
Umaasa po kami na kakatigan ninyo ang aming taimtim na ipinakikiusap. Nasa inyo po ang aming walang hanggang pagsuporta at pagtitiwala.

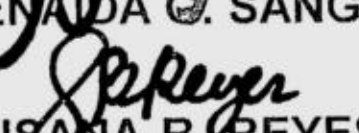
Maraming salamat po. Mabuhay po kayo.

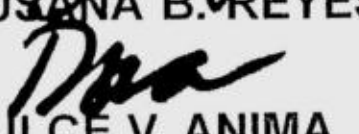
Lubos na gumagalang,

Members of the Board


SALMA P. SANTOS


ZENaida G. SANG-OLAN


SUSANA B. REYES


DULCE V. ANIMA


NENITA MURAY


ROSLYN JIMCANG

Docs call for rule of law

THE UMBRELLA organization of the country's medical doctors is prescribing a cure for the national body politic — adherence to the rule of law, respect for the Constitution and the repudiation of violence and frequent and unlawful changes to the nation's leadership.

The Philippine Medical Association (PMA), the country's biggest professional association for doctors, issued its resolution and joint manifesto on Tuesday calling for all Filipinos to respect the Constitution and the rule of law.

In a press statement, the PMA also expressed its opposition to frequent and unlawful changes in government that may lead to further political instability.

The association, composed of some 28,000 active member-doctors nationwide, said it issued the resolution after a series of consultative meetings and surveys of its membership, which lasted till last weekend. The PMA said it decided to issue the board resolution to let the public know the united stand of Filipino doctors in light of the present political issues gripping the nation. However, they stressed that their advocacy was non-partisan and in complete fidelity with the doctors' responsibility to society.

The association also called on

the government to respect the right of the people to free expression and information.

The resolution was signed by 22 board members and officers: They are: Modesto O. Llamas, president; Jose Asa Sabili, vice president; Rey Melchor F. Santos, secretary general; Monalisa F. Cosme, assistant secretary general; Leo Douglas V. Cardona, national treasurer; Cirilo R. Galindez, governor for Northeastern Luzon; Pedro G. Papio, governor for Central Luzon; Joselito DC. Urgel, governor for Bicol; Emmet L. Custodio, governor for Western Visayas; Jose Oliver B. Yu, governor for Central Visayas; Cesar A. Aquitania, governor for Eastern Visayas; Ma. Phoebe Lim-Catipon, governor for Rizal; Domingo C. Pascual, governor for Central Tagalog; Arthur V. Tolentino, governor for Southern Tagalog; Artemio A. Niolo, governor for Western Mindanao; Jesus M. Jardin, governor for Northern Mindanao; Marietta C. Puentes, governor for Northcentral Mindanao; Calixander S. Dumas, governor for Caraga; Santiago A. Del Rosario, chair, association of former PMA Presidents; Nenita C. Lee Tan, past president and presidential adviser; and Gil C. Fernandez, past president and presidential adviser.

THE DAILY GOSPEL



Thursday, July 21, 2005
16th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ex 19:1-2, 9-11, 16-20
Gospel: Matthew 13:10-17

Jesus' disciples came to him with the question, "Why do you speak to them in parables?"

Jesus answered, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but not to these people. For the one who has, will be given more and he will have in abundance. But the one who does not have will be deprived of even what he has. That is why I speak to them in parables, because they look and do not see; they hear, but they do not listen or understand.

In them the words of the prophet Isaiah are fulfilled: Much as you hear, you do not understand; much as you see, you do not perceive.

For the heart of this people has grown dull. Their ears hardly hear and their eyes dare not see. If they were to see with their eyes, hear with their ears and understand with their heart, they would turn back and I would heal them.

But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears, because they hear.

For I tell you that many prophets and upright people would have longed to see the things you see, but they did not, and to hear the things you hear, but they did not hear it.

Commentary

The disciples are at a loss to know why Jesus keeps telling parables. A parable lets everyone hear what they need—and the point where they resist or pull back is the point where conversion begins for them. Parables are multi-layered. Every time you hear on, if you changed the last time you heard it, then you will hear something else. If you haven't changed, not only will you only hear it the same, but you will not be taken or captured by its power to transform, and reveal the truth. A parable doesn't let anyone off the hook. It's a story that carries a great weight of mystery and secrets, hiding as much as it uncovers. But if you are not open to the storyteller—to Jesus—and to the fact that you might be wrong and could use a bit of change, you can't understand it at all. Jesus is angered that people are listening to him, being healed and yet they are not choosing to follow him—the parable is Jesus' way of still teaching and touching the heart of those who are open, but at the same time, keeping the pearl of great price out of the clutches of those who do not appreciate it. We are blessed—we have all of Jesus' parables, and Jesus himself. Do we keep being changed so that the stories of Jesus come true in us and the world?

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: cci@claret.org; Websites: <http://www.bible.claret.org> (Claretian Publications Inc.) & <http://missionaries.claret.org> (Claretians in the Philippines)

Teves eyes implementation of VAT law by September

THE GOVERNMENT is confident that the expanded value-added tax will be imposed starting September this year if the Supreme Court rules in favor of lifting the temporary restraining order (TRO) on the critical tax measure.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the earliest the VAT

would be implemented was Sept. 1 considering that the high court had announced it would make a decision on the TRO on or before Aug. 15.

The opposition filed an injunction against the expanded VAT law, which was supposed to start on July 1, because some of the provisions in the new law

were unconstitutional.

While the SC pondered on the constitutionality of some of the VAT provisions, the DOF has been busy cooking up compensatory measures meant to fill up the drop in revenues due to the suspension of the tax measure.

Some of the stop-gap mea-

sures meant to compensate for the estimated losses of P130 million a day from the VAT delay include the re-imposition of duties on petroleum products and an across-the-board hike in import duties by one percent.

Teves said the government was keenly awaiting the SC be-

cause it might also decide to allow the partial implementation of the VAT by striking out the unconstitutional provisions for amendment in Congress.

These provisions are the grant of a provisional authority to the President to raise the VAT rate from 10 percent to 12 per-

cent starting next year (only Congress can raise taxes), and raising the corporate income tax from 32 percent to 35 percent and a cap on the input VAT of business firms that were proposed in the Senate and not the House of Representatives where all tax proposals should emanate.

Demolition job, cries Gonzalez

By Armand N. Nocum

JUSTICE Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday said there could be a "demolition job" against him, citing the INQUIRER story the other day blaming him for supposed delays in the resolution of the bribery case against his predecessor, Hernando Perez.

The people who leaked the story to the media were out to destroy him, Gonzalez said.

The things written about in the INQUIRER report "speak for themselves," he said.

"The story that I'm sitting on it is not true. How can I be sitting on something that left my desk on June 27?" asked Gonzalez.

But he said he was willing to accept the blame for the delay because the "buck stops here."

An unnamed Ombudsman prosecutor claimed that Gonzalez had refused to ask for legal assistance from his counterpart in Hong Kong to obtain the bank records of Perez and his associates, which allegedly delayed the Ombudsman investigation of the bribery complaint against Perez.

The Ombudsman's Office had been asked for the documents by the Swiss government which was investigating Perez for allegedly laundering \$2 million in a Swiss bank account.

Gonzalez explained that he did take his time in acting on the request of the Swiss Embassy to be furnished documents on the Perez case "because I was not very happy with foreign governments dictating on us."

A justice department prosecutor yesterday blamed the lack of a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) with Hong Kong for the delay in the resolution of the case against Perez, who is accused of extorting \$2 million from a South American energy firm.

Marlyn Angeles, a prosecutor at the justice department's legal department, said the Department of Justice needed the cooperation of the Hong Kong government because it was through the Coutts Bank in Hong Kong that money allegedly intended for Perez was alleged to have been laundered in 2001.

"If there is no existing MLAT, what happens is that the Hong Kong government would first ask us for a repository undertaking, meaning they should also obtain bank records from the Philippines before releasing documents to us," she said.

Angeles said the MLAT with Hong Kong was only approved last year.

She denied delaying the Ombudsman's request, saying that she had first to closely evaluate the matter.

"We have to follow the format being prescribed by the Hong Kong government in the MLAT," she said.

The MLAT provided for "mandatory assurances" that the case was not "related to prosecution or punishment of a person for political affairs" or "discrimination," she explained.

Angeles said that after receiving the instructions from Gonzalez on June 2, she evaluated it, finished the draft on June 23 and sent it to the Ombudsman on July 11.

She said that what the DOJ had asked from Hong Kong were "authentic and certified true copies or original bank records involving" the case filed against Ernest de Leon Escaler, a former consultant of the Coutts Bank for the Philippines, and who allegedly facilitated the money transfer.

Goquingco necro

THE NECROLOGICAL service for the late National Artist in Dance, Leonor Orosa-Goquingco, will be held at the CCP Main Theater on Friday at 9 a.m.

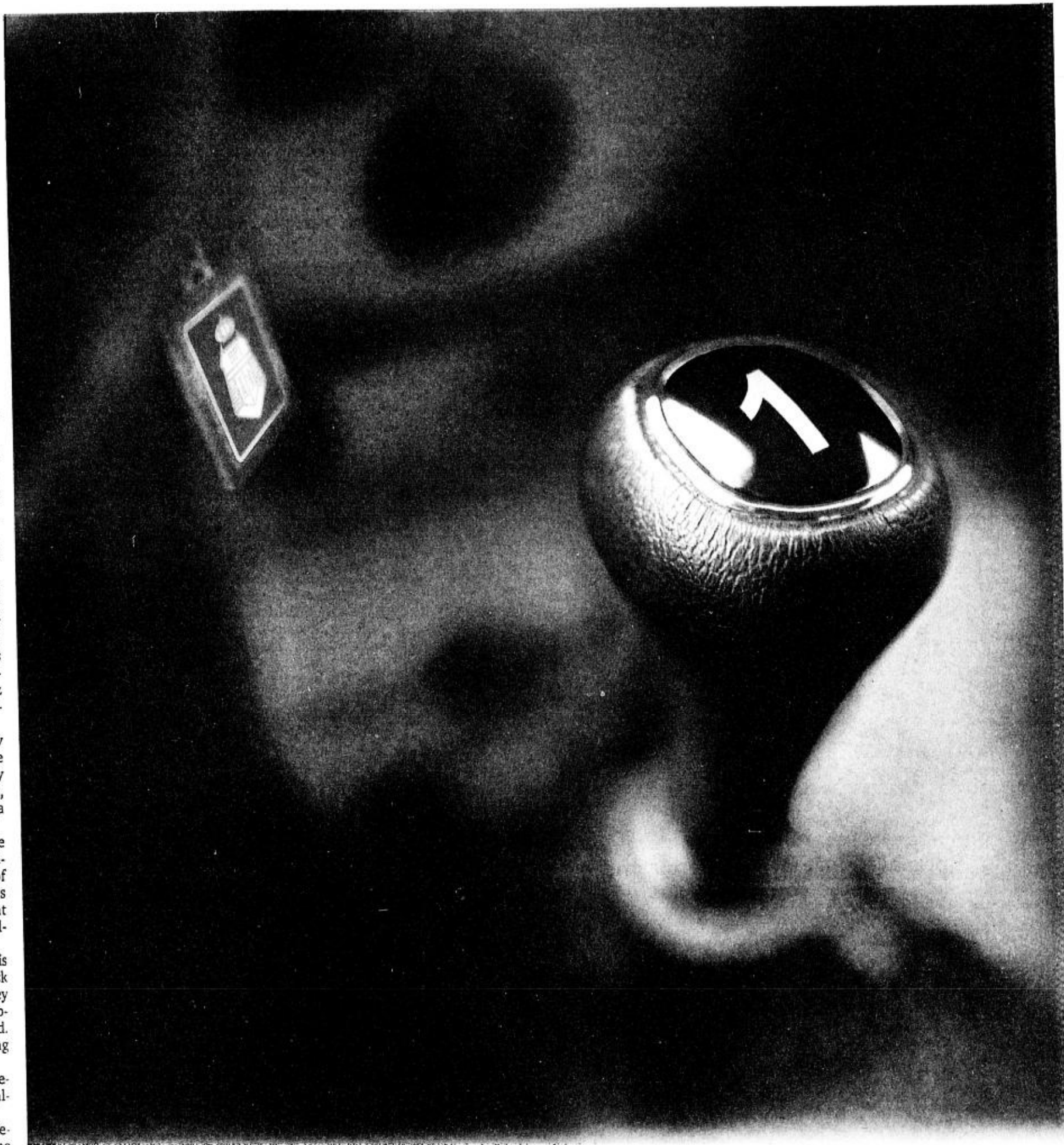
Interment will immediately follow the service.

Agojo; 52

DR. MILAGROS Perez Agojo died yesterday at the age of 52.

She is survived by her parents, Ireneo N. Agojo and Virginia Perez Agojo; siblings Erlinda Cornico, Ireneo Jr., Reynaldo, Estrellita, Roberto, and Manolo.

Her body lies at the Magallanes St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish Chapel 1. Interment will be at the Eternal Garden in Lipa City on Saturday, July 23, after a 9:30 a.m. Mass at Magallanes and 1 p.m. Mass at Tanauan Parish, Tanauan City, Batangas.



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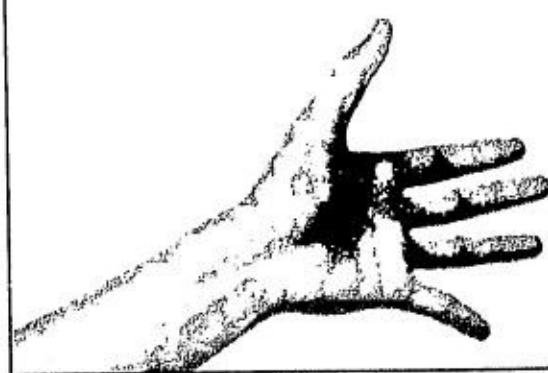
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Party-list lawmakers quit De Venecia's House coalition

By Philip C. Tubeza

PARTY-LIST lawmakers met with the Speaker Jose de Venecia on Monday night to inform him of their decision to bolt the administration coalition in the House of Representatives because of their call for President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign.

This was according to Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Teodoro Casio.

Besides Casio, the other lawmakers who attended were Bayan Muna Representatives Satur Ocampo and Joel Virador, Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza and Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano. De Venecia and the militant

congressmen agreed that their political parting would be amicable, Casio said.

"It was a very candid conversation and very warm. We have had a good relationship although we came from different points of view," he said.

"We thanked him for his help to the party-list groups but we

said that we could no longer stay in the majority considering our call for GMA to resign," Casio added.

Ocampo said that despite their formal break with the administration coalition, the Speaker agreed to continue to dialogue with the Left.

"It was very clear cut and

aboveboard. We supported him for the speakership and we agreed that however this crisis would be resolved, even if (the administration camp) loses, we would still talk," he said.

The Leftist lawmakers formally announced their break with the administration coalition in a press conference yesterday.

"We declare our group an independent bloc within the House. In practice, however, under the rules of the House, we will be declared members of the minority," they said in a joint statement.

The lawmakers said they were resigning from their committee positions.

Lawmakers paint grim Sona scenario

From page A1

Ms Arroyo would dish out the same fare she had been giving the country the past four years.

"Lies, lies and more lies," said Lacson, who is scheduled to deliver an alternate Sona on Friday. "Year in, year out, she has been talking of reforms. We hear that every year—reforms. It's been four-and-a-half years and it's the same theme for her Sona. What should we expect on Monday but more of the same," Lacson said.

Administration Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. said time was running out on the administration.

He wrote Ms Arroyo to ask her

to institute urgent reforms to regain the trust of the people.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo must let go of her micro-management and let her new Cabinet do their own cleaning up, reforming, transforming, and reengineering their respective agencies. They are responsible and accountable to the whole country," Magsaysay said in another letter to Senate President Franklin Drilon informing him of his letter to Ms Arroyo.

To avoid issue

Lacson doubts Ms Arroyo would talk about her wiretapped conversations with former Election Commissioner Virgilio Gar-

cillano as broached by her political adviser Gabriel Claudio.

"I think she will avoid the issue," Lacson said. In the taped conversations, Ms Arroyo allegedly directed Garcillano to rig the presidential election last year.

At least four opposition senators—Lacson, Serge Osmeña, Luisa "Loi" Estrada and her son Jinggoy Estrada—have said they won't show up at the Batasan for the Sona.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., the first to call for Ms Arroyo's resignation, has refused to say whether he would attend the Sona.

Even Malacañang's promise that Ms Arroyo will talk about the "Hello Garci" tapes does not impress Pimentel.

He said whatever the President would say "has no value as far as I'm concerned" because "she does not have the credibility."

Osmeña said Ms Arroyo was not in a position to "speak in behalf of the country."

Tight security

Groups seeking the President's ouster for alleged cheating in the last elections have vowed to mount their biggest rally yet on July 25.

Police expect 30,000 to 40,000

protesters to gather near the House of Representatives where the President will deliver her Sona on July 25.

A top police official said security would be tight due to threats of sabotage by communist rebels.

"We are going to stop these communist infiltrators and saboteurs at every bend and turn along the way toward the Sona," Director Vidal Querol, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, said after a command conference with Quezon City police officials yesterday.

"We are going to throw in more stringent measures," he added.

Querol cited reports that Communist Party of the Philippines spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal had given orders to New People's Army guerrillas to infiltrate protest rallies during the Sona.

He urged protesters to police their ranks and guard against NPA infiltration.

"We will not allow NPAs into the rallies. We will not allow any incident like the Plaza Miranda bombing," Querol said, referring to the 1971 bombing of a political opposition rally in Quiapo, Manila, that preceded the imposition of martial law the following year.

From shanty to skyscraper

From page A1

Quintal now works for a construction firm in Makati City as a quantity surveyor, preparing bid documents, and resources and manpower schedule. He holds office on the 17th floor of a glass skyscraper on Paseo de Roxas Avenue.

Local pride

The feat of the young graduate of the Catanduanes State Colleges (CSC) brought joy to schoolmates, neighbors and town mates, and stirred a sense of pride among them.

"The municipality of Virac congratulates Ruben Tabuzo Quintal for topping the May 2005 Civil Engineer Board Exam. We are proud of you," read a streamer at the main entrance to the municipal hall.

Other streamers with similar greetings for Ruben were festooned at the school and his neighborhood.

"Ruben brought big honor to San Pablo," said the barangay chair, Hernandez Sarmiento, in Bicol. He organized a "padasal" (prayer session) in one of the

village's three chapels, a procession and a dance program on May 19 in honor of the toponotcher, who was then still in Manila.

The day before, teachers, staff members and students of the CSC organized a motorcade and torch parade in the downtown area. His mother was on the lead vehicle.

Shy and silent

Described by his mother as "shy" and "silent," Quintal said he did not see himself topping the exams. "I was expecting to land in the Top 20," he told the INQUIRER.

But he reckoned that he would get an average grade of 96.11 percent because he found one question tricky. He was wrong on both counts.

What helped him prepare for the exams was his rigorous training as a "quizzzer" (his school's representative in intercollegiate academic contests). In the run-up to the licensure tests, he represented the CSC in regional and national quizzes for civil engineering students.

At first, he did not win the plum prizes in the contests. "At



A DREAM come true for a laundrywoman and her husband, a billiards spotter. Berly and Ruben Quintal Sr. are back home in Barangay San Pablo, Virac, Catanduanes, as their son works in the central business district in Makati.

JUAN V. SARMIENTO JR.

the Invitational Quiz of the Bicol University in Legazpi, when I was in my third year [of college], I was eliminated," he said.

The following year, in 2003, he and a teammate placed fifth at the National CE Quiz-for-a-Cause sponsored by the Padilla Review Center in Manila.

He was fourth runner-up at the regional PICE (Philippine Institute

of Civil Engineers) Quiz Elimination held in Naga City that year.

Rising to the top

With the lessons from past quizzes and unflagging commitment to study hard, Quintal rose to the top of the pack.

On Sept. 10, 2004, he and a schoolmate bested more than 240 contestants from 80 private and state universities and colleges across the country. They won the team championship in the 2004 National Civil Engineering Quiz on the University of the Philippines (UP) campus in Diliman, Quezon City, beating the best and the brightest from such schools as Mapua, University of Sto. Tomas and UP at Los Baños.

The quiz was sponsored by the UP Aces (Association of Civil Engineering Students).

Quintal and his teammate, Devy Santos, finished 1-2 in the individual contest sponsored by the Besavilla Engineering Review Center.

On Nov. 25, 2004, Quintal won first prize in the National PICE Quiz at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City, beating other contestants

from 12 regions. He represented Bicol after topping the regional eliminations in Naga on Sept. 30.

Study habits

From whom did Quintal get his intelligence? "From both of us," Berly said in Bicol as she glanced at her husband during the INQUIRER interview at their home by the sea.

But to Quintal, intelligence goes beyond genes. "Intelligence is not due to heredity but to one's determination to finish school. No one is stupid if one studies," Berly said, recalling what her son had told her.

The elder Quintal worried about his son's study habits so much, fearing that it might drive him crazy.

"He takes a break from his review only for lunch and dinner. At night, our light is not switched off," Ruben Sr. said in Bicol.

Looking back to her son's preschool years, Berly said "he first wanted to be a scientist so he could go to the moon. I told him, 'You cannot become a scientist because we are poor. You should just stick to your second choice

and be a civil engineer."

Math whiz

The second of three children, Quintal showed his talent for numbers at an early age. He represented the Virac Central Elementary School in Math quizzes. At the CSC Laboratory High School, he was a three-time Math Olympiad champion of Catanduanes and represented the province in regional contests.

He was supposed to enroll at UPLB for his college degree after winning a slot, but his family's financial difficulties prevented him from doing so. "We told him, 'You just study here [in Virac] because we can't send you money if you are in UPLB,'" his mother said.

Without a scholarship, Quintal's parents would have found it difficult to send him to the CSC to take up civil engineering. For five years, he received P3,000 for tuition each semester from a lawyer-benefactor, Eleanor Tabuzo.

Quintal attributed his success to diligence and Divine Providence. "Just study hard, pray hard and always trust in Him," he advised students.

Virac school has produced other topnotchers

From page A1

CSC. It's good and it's cheap," said Hernandez Sarmiento, barangay chair of San Pablo, where Quintal lives.

In the CSC's eight colleges, except agriculture, a unit of a course or subject costs P100. The College of Agriculture charges P80 per unit.

In contrast, a unit for an engineering course in the University of Sto. Tomas is P899.20; Mapua Institute of Technology, P1,292; and De La Salle University, P1,896.

Engineering students of the CSC come from poor families who cannot afford to study in Manila, according to their dean, Charlie Hibo. Most of them are children of farmers, fishermen, laundrywomen, tricycle drivers and gapa-loteng (people who col-

lect bets for an illegal numbers game based on results of the lotto draw in Manila), he said.

First-rate lectures

"Despite the dearth of physical resources common in state colleges, the faculty [members] of the CSC College of Engineering are known to provide their students with first-rate lectures, thus priming the students for the eventual rigors of the review and board examination," said Gerry S. Rubio of the school's Office of the President.

Hibo acknowledged that the engineering laboratory had old surveying tools and lacked basic equipment, such as a hydraulic bench to study pressure and fluid flow.

To acquaint the students with modern equipment, they go on a trip (equivalent to one subject) to



THE TOPNOTCHER brings great pride and joy to his alma mater, the Catanduanes State Colleges in Virac. Quintal would not have afforded going to college were it not for his benefactor lawyer Eleanor Tabuzo who paid for his tuition.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Manila or Baguio City and visit construction firms, according to the dean.

The lack in physical resources is somehow compensated by the teaching experience of the College of Engineering faculty. Its 15 members have been teaching for

an average of 20 years.

Also, a key factor in making students understand difficult concepts is the use of Bicol as medium of instruction.

Hibo, who has spent the past 30 years teaching, said 25 percent of the lectures were conduct-

ed in the vernacular.

"If they cannot grasp a concept in English, we say it in Tagalog. If they still do not understand, we use Bicol," he said in Bicol. "We are trilingual in the classroom."

Members of the faculty also guide promising students. "If we see students with potential, we advise them and put them in a review class," Hibo said.

A strict screening process has weeded out students who perform poorly.

If one fails in three major subjects (Math, Physics and Chemistry), a student is automatically kicked out. Last school year, more than 100 students were disqualified from the first and second years.

As a result, those who reach third and fourth years tend to do well in their studies, according to Hibo.

The CSC's main campus sits on

a 98-hectare property in Barangay Calatagan, 2 km from the commercial district. It has 5,682 college students, some of whom come from Camarines Sur and Albay.

Advantages

Studying in a town like Virac also offers students some advantages.

Gloria Magistrado, a retired professor, said college students in the town did not face distractions, such as movie houses and malls found in Metro Manila and other urban centers.

They also enjoy relative peace and quiet, and are not assaulted by air and noise pollution and heavy traffic like their counterparts in the big city.

Moreover, guidance from parents helps students concentrate on their studies, according to Magistrado.

Hello, mayor: President thanks 31 Iloilo leaders

From page A1

talked over the mobile phone with each of the 31 mayors who attended a meeting of Iloilo officials supporting her administration.

The chat at around noon was short and sweet—each lasting for about a minute long, said Vice Gov. Roberto Armada, provincial secretary general of the ruling party, Lakas.

Armada said the mobile phone that the President called was passed around by the mayors attending the meeting of the Kaibi-

gan ni GMA on Saturday at the Riverhiv Restaurant.

1st name basis

"It was a casual talk. She addressed them by their first names," Armada told the INQUIRER.

Armada said the President thanked the mayors for their continued support and invited them to attend her State of the Nation Address (Sona) in Congress on July 25.

He said the President talked to the mayors in Hiligaynon and told them: "Hello, kamusta kamo

dira? Salamat gid sa pagsuporta ninyo sa akon. Kit-anay kita. (Hello, how are you? Thank you for supporting me. We will see each other (at the Sona)."

Rare

Ms Arroyo reportedly changed her cell phone habits after her wiretapped conversation with former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano came out. The opposition claimed that the phone recordings proved that she conspired with Garcillano to rig last year's elections.

Ms Arroyo reportedly cut down

on the use of her mobile phone in running the government, unlike before when most of her decisions and instructions were relayed through cell phone.

But Armada said the President was apparently "elated and went out of her way" to call them when she learned that 31 of the province's 43 mayors attended the meeting to show their continued support.

"The mayors were honored and very happy because they did not expect her to talk to them individually," said Armada.

Ajuy Mayor Jett Rojas said he ex-

plained to Ms Arroyo they remained supportive of her administration.

He said he was happy to receive the call because it was rare that national officials, especially the President, would talk to mayors over the phone.

"It's sometimes good when there are problems like these because the top officials seek us out," Rojas said in a telephone interview.

Tug-of-war

At least 25 mayors and two provincial members will attend the Sona. They would also be

meeting with the President the next day, said Armada.

The President's call was apparently part of her wooing of the mayors who were caught in a tug-of-war for support between Ms Arroyo's camp and that of Senate President Franklin Drilon and his close ally, Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas Sr.

Drilon announced his break from the President on July 8, hours after 10 Cabinet members and officials resigned from their posts and former President Corazon Aquino and the Makati Business Club also called on Ms Arroyo to resign.



WIN this Gintong Aklat today!

July 21, 2005 Today's Question:
Who is the author of the comic book Pugad Baboy?

A. Arnold Arre B. Carlo Vergara C. Pol Medina Jr.

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07-13-06 Winner
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07-20-06 Answer: A
Pugad Baboy (1986) is a work of the National Artist Virgilio Almario.



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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

China's military buildup a threat to region – US

WASHINGTON—China's rapidly modernizing military could pose a long-term threat to other regional armed forces but its ability to project conventional power beyond its borders remains limited, the Pentagon said on Tuesday.

In its long-awaited annual report, the Pentagon said Beijing's military buildup has already begun to put the regional balance at risk. But it also concluded that China does not now possess the military capability to attack Taiwan.

It described China as being at a strategic crossroads that could lead down three paths but "not yet set immutably on one course or another." One path is peaceful integration and benign competition in the world. Or China would exert dominant influence in an expanding sphere. A third path sees China as a less confident, inward-looking state

focused on challenges to national unity and the Chinese Communist Party's claim to legitimacy.

"Questions remain about the basic choices China's leaders will make as China's power and influence grow, particularly its military power," the report said.

The Pentagon has been raising alarms over China's military modernization for several years.

The annual report, always controversial, is the focus of even more attention this year because of increasingly vocal concerns in Washington over China's trade, currency and proliferation trends, as well as

the military buildup.

It went through considerable vetting by US agencies besides the Pentagon and included the personal involvement of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, who in the past often left the task to his deputy, a former administration official said.

"As I see it, China is on a path where they are determined to increase their economy, the opportunities for their people and to enter the world community. They want the (2008) Olympics to go well. They are doing a number of things to leave the world with the impression that they are a good place for investment and a good economic partner," Rumsfeld told a news briefing before the report was released.

While US-China ties have improved since 2001—when a US surveillance plane collided with a

Chinese fighter jet in international air space off the Chinese coast—the military buildup underscores why Washington opposes European Union military sales to Beijing, he said.

But asked if he saw "gathering clouds" and a threat similar to what Europe faced from Germany in the 1930s, Rumsfeld replied: "I guess the short answer is no."

In the short term, Beijing appears "focused on preventing Taiwan independence or trying to compel Taiwan to negotiate a settlement on Beijing's terms," the report said.

China has deployed some 650-730 mobile short-range ballistic missiles and 375,000 ground forces opposite Taiwan, has more than 700 aircraft within range of the island and is modernizing its longer-range ballistic missile force.

Reuters

Al-Qaida group threatens Europe cities

CAIRO—A statement in the name of a group that claimed responsibility for the London bombings threatened to launch "a bloody war" on the capitals of European countries that do not remove their troops from Iraq within a month.

"This is the last message we send to the European countries. We are giving you one month for your soldiers to leave the Land of the Two Rivers. Then there will be no other messages, but actions, and the words will be engraved in the heart of Europe," Abu Hafs al Masri Brigades said in a statement.

The "two rivers" in the statement refer to Iraq's Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

The authenticity of the statement—which surfaced on an Islamic Web site known as a clearing house for extremist groups' material—could not be verified.

A US official said some mystery surrounds the group, which has no proven track record of attacks.

Experts are skeptical of its statements. The organization has claimed responsibility for events in which it clearly did not play any role, such as the 2003 blackouts in the US and London.

The US official said there is a school of thought that the name may apply to an umbrella organization for a loose group of terrorists that take actions in the name of al-Masri—one alias of Mohammed Atef, Osama bin Laden's top deputy who was killed in a US airstrike in Afghanistan in November 2001.

While loosely defined, the group is thought to have a presence in Europe, said the official.

It is not the first time this group has threatened European nations. In recent months it said its operatives would strike in Europe if European nations did not withdraw their troops from Afghanistan and Iraq.

AP

Indonesia confirms first bird flu deaths

JAKARTA—Indonesia on Wednesday confirmed its first deaths from bird flu, saying tests on a father and his two young daughters who died recently showed they had the virus, a minister said on Wednesday.

"Test results from a Hong Kong laboratory which I received this morning confirmed they were positive for the H5N1 virus," Health Minister Siti Fadillah Supari told reporters.

Asked if the three died from bird flu, Supari said: "Yes." "It is not yet known how they got infected, but we continue to conduct an investigation on the ground," she said.

"The results show (the virus is) a conventional one, and not a new virus. Therefore, there is no need to worry about human-to-human transmission."

Authorities have taken samples of more than 300 people who had contact with the family on the outskirts of Jakarta.

They also plan to carry out extensive tests on animals within a 20-km radius of the family's house and slaughter those infected.

The bird flu virus, which arrived in Asia in late 2003, has previously killed 40 people in Vietnam, half of them since December, 12 in Thailand and four Cambodians.

Health authorities fear the virus will mutate and become easily passed between humans, causing a global pandemic.

Last month, Indonesia reported its first human case in a poultry worker, but the man did not develop symptoms and is healthy. Reuters

Signature of Cameron Diaz over topless pictures of actress forged

LOS ANGELES—Prosecutors rested their case Tuesday in the trial of a photographer accused of forging Hollywood star Cameron Diaz's signature on a document allowing the sale of topless pictures of the actress.

Snapper John Rutter's defense got its chance to rebut the allegations against him a day after experts testified that the "Charlie's Angels" star's autograph on a model release form was faked.

The photographer is accused of using the bare-breasted pictures of Diaz he snapped when she was an unknown model in 1992 in an attempt to blackmail the top Hollywood movie actress out of more than three million dollars.

Rutter's former agent Frank Moore told the jury in Los Angeles that the photographer was conscientious about securing model releases from his subjects and that



DIAZ

it was typical to do so on the day of a photo shoot.

However, on cross-examination, Moore, the first witness for the defense conceded he had no idea if model release forms were actually signed for the disputed topless shoot of Diaz when she was just 19.

The testimony came after two experts testified on Monday that the signature on the model release purportedly allowing the exploitation of the pictures of Diaz was not that of the actress.

Forensic examiner Bruce Greenwood said he was certain that the signature in Diaz's name on a publicity photo of the actress and her "Feeling Minnesota" co-star Keanu Reeves was not hers. He noted that certain letters in Diaz's name were "slanted completely different" from the handwriting samples he had been provided by the actress.

AFP

WORLD BRIEFS

Canadian Senate OKs gay marriage

TORONTO—Canada's Senate voted to adopt landmark legislation to legalize gay marriage nationwide despite fierce opposition from Conservatives and religious leaders. The bill could be signed into law as early as Wednesday. The bill grants same-sex couples legal rights equal to those in traditional unions between a man and a woman, something already legal in a majority of Canadian provinces. The legislation was drafted by Prime Minister Paul Martin's minority Liberal Party government. The bill becomes law when it is signed by Canada's Governor General. Once that happens, Canada will become only the fourth country in the world to legalize gay marriage nationwide, after the Netherlands, Belgium and Spain.

AP

Suicide bomber kills 10 in Iraq

BAGHDAD—A man strapped with explosives blew himself up among a group of Iraqi army recruits in Baghdad on Wednesday, killing up to 10 people and wounding more than 20, police and hospital officials said. Police sources said the bomber mingled with a crowd of men standing outside a recruiting center at an abandoned airfield in the Muthana district of central Baghdad before detonating an explosive belt. Officials at Yarmouk hospital said they had received about 10 dead and 22 wounded. The Muthana airfield recruiting center has been attacked by suicide bombers several times in the past.

Reuters

Bush names Judge Roberts to SC

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush chose conservative appeals court judge John Roberts on Tuesday as his first nominee to the Supreme Court, igniting what could be a fierce partisan clash over his drive to move the closely divided court to the right. With Roberts at his side, Bush appealed for a "dignified

confirmation process" and a timely vote by the full Senate—in contrast to the drawn out battles that blocked 10 of his most conservative nominees during his first term. At 50 years of age, Roberts could put Bush's conservative stamp on the court for decades to come if he is confirmed by the Senate to the lifetime post. The choice immediately sparked controversy.

Reuters

Afghan warlord gets 20 years in jail

LONDON—Afghan warlord Faryadi Sarwar Zardad was sentenced to 20 years in prison by a London court Tuesday for torture and hostage-taking in Afghanistan in a landmark case for international law. Zardad, 42, who lived in south London, had denied the charges, which included keeping a "human dog" to savage his victims. In the first trial of its kind under a UN torture convention, Zardad, who fled to Britain in 1998 on a fake passport, was prosecuted at the Old Bailey even though he is not a British citizen and his crimes were committed overseas.

AFP

3 British soldiers face trial

LONDON—Three British soldiers will be tried in a military court in Britain on the war crimes charge of abusing prisoners in Iraq, including one who died, Attorney General Lord Goldsmith said Tuesday. The three are among 11 British servicemen who face a range of charges in two separate cases arising from alleged abuses in Iraq in the months after the US-led invasion on March 20, 2003. Although charged under the International Criminal Court Act of 2001, the servicemen will face court martial in Britain rather than being tried at The Hague. One of the soldiers, Corporal Donald Payne, will also face manslaughter charges over the death of prisoner Baha Da'oud Salim Musa, according to the office of the attorney general.

AFP

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Cerebral malaria strikes Olongapo

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—At least 276 people at the outskirts of Olongapo City were stricken with malaria, most of them infected with the deadly cerebral strain, the Department of Health said on Wednesday after two weeks of blood smear tests in that city.

The number of cases, especially of cerebral malaria (248 cases), in the city's five upland villages was "unusually high" but no victim has died in recent days, Dr. Juvencio Ordoña, DOH director in Central Luzon told the INQUIRER.

"We are surprised about the big number but this is no outbreak. We got to learn of the cases through an extensive check with the city health office that reported the incidents [on July 7]. As we have suspected, this has gone on for quite a time. The residents have developed strong resistance against the disease," he said.

The parasite species *Plasmodium jalciparum*, which causes cerebral malaria, was confirmed positive in 90 percent of the cases, according to a report from the DOH's malaria prevention and control center.

Barangay New Cabalan recorded the highest number of malaria cases at 236, the report showed. There were 21 cases in Gordon

Heights, nine in Old Cabalan, eight in Banaelto and two in Mabuyan.

Most of the victims live near the Bangad River and its creeks, and in forested areas.

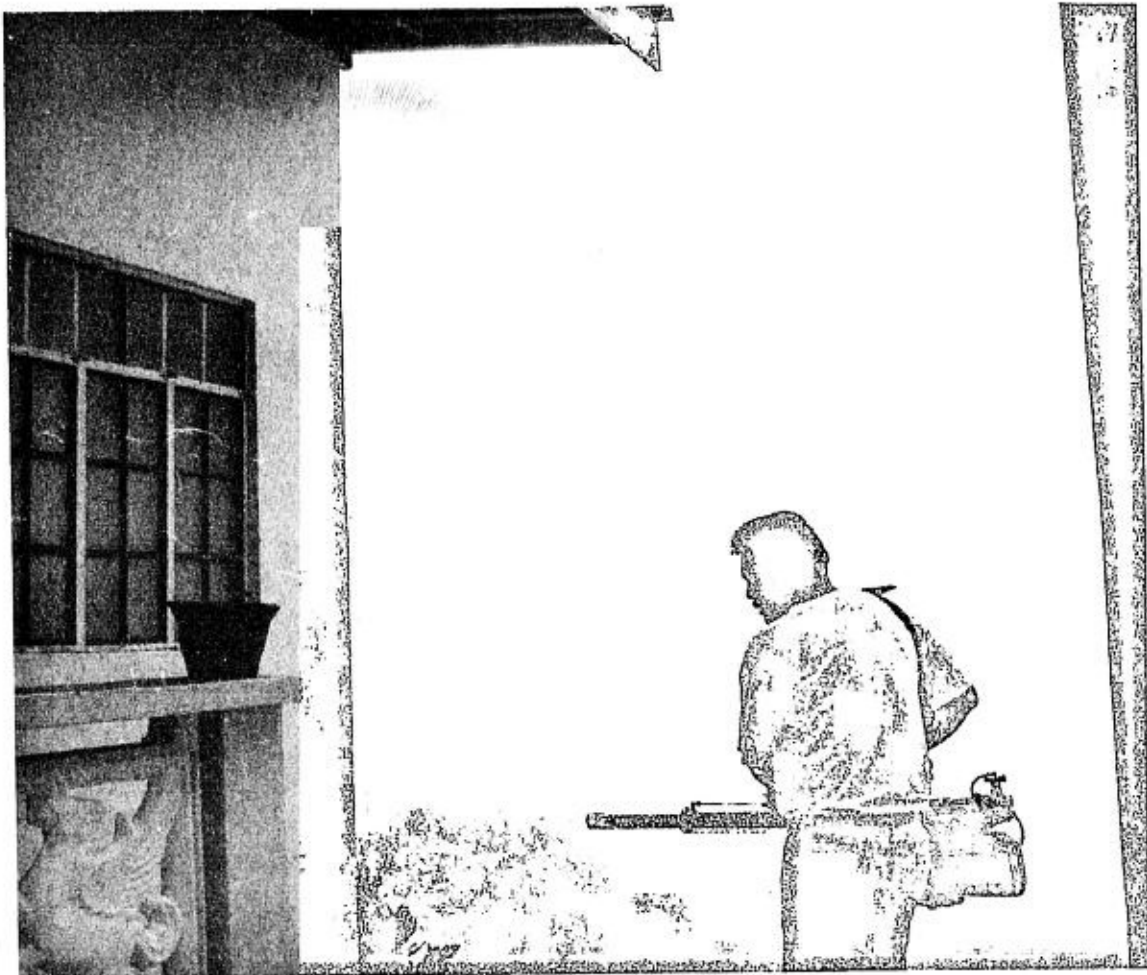
People with malaria suffer chills, fever and extensive sweating. At its worst stage, patients experience anemia and enlargement of the spleen.

The situation, Ordoña said, was "already under control," citing the provision of anti-malaria treatment and insecticide-treated mosquito nets to victims.

The DOH team also sprayed the houses with insecticides. The river and creeks were treated with larvicide to eliminate breeding sites.

The team recommended village-level malaria control measures and the creation of surveillance units.

The malaria cases in Olongapo City this month surpassed the 244 cases recorded in six Central Luzon provinces from January to March this year, DOH records showed.



WORKERS use fogging machines in Candon, Ilocos Sur to fight another menace, dengue carrying mosquitoes.

LEONCIO BALBIN/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Cordillera rebs say they won't disrupt Sona

BAGUIO CITY—The spokesperson of the Cordillera Peoples Democratic Front denied military reports that it had been ordered by the Communist Party of the Philippines to disrupt the State of the Nation Address of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Definitely, the supposed intervention [of communist rebels] in [protest actions] during the Sona does not jibe with the policies of the CPP, the New People's Army and the National Democratic Front. The people's grievances against [Ms Arroyo] are enough and they do not need the armed movement to express these grievances," Ka Filiw, spokesperson of the CPDF, the regional political arm of the NDF, told the INQUIRER on Wednesday.

He said members of the NPA and its allied armed organizations never involved themselves with protest activities during the Sona of past presidents.

He said their operations are confined only in the provinces.

"The smear campaign against the [communist] movement is expected ... The logic of this propaganda is to justify a violent dispersal [of protesters during the] Sona," he said. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Bishop says his last witness knows so much about 'jueteng'

DAGUPAN CITY—Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said he only has one "star witness" left to present to the Senate committees investigating *jueteng* after which he will rest his case.

The Senate has postponed the *jueteng* hearings indefinitely until the "star witness"

is ready to testify.

"Perhaps next week, the investigations will resume. After my last witness testifies, it will be up to the committees to continue as my witness will be mentioning names of government officials involved in *jueteng* operations. These officials must given a

chance to tell their side," Cruz, national chair of the Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng, said.

He described the "star witness" as more knowledgeable than confessed *jueteng* bagwom-an Sandra Cam, but refused to say from which province he comes from.

He said two supposed witnesses from Pampanga backed out after they were given P2 million each by either government officials or *jueteng* operators.

"It looked like some supposed witnesses came forward so that they would be bribed not to testify," he said.

"This just shows how bad *jueteng* is—it is the parallel government. Everybody knows who the *jueteng* lords are but the politicians are afraid of crossing them because the *jueteng* lords will talk against them." *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Drilon says secession threats just 'noise'

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Senate President Franklin Drilon has scored threats of pro-administration governors in the Visayas to put a separate "Visayas Republic" if President Macapagal-Arroyo is ousted.

"I think that is out of place... it's all political noise," Drilon said in a media briefing here over the weekend.

He said the plan was "contrary" to the Constitution. "I would like to believe that we have a Constitution which should be followed. And secession from the republic is certainly (against the Constitution)," said Drilon.

The plan was discussed during a summit attended by pro-administration officials in the Visayas at the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City on July 14.

Thirteen governors, two vice governors, and several mayors agreed to secede from the

country if the President was forcibly ousted.

The governors who were absent were Niel Tupas Sr. of Iloilo, Joseph Marañon of Negros Occidental and Raul Daza of Northern Samar. Daza belonged to the opposition. Tupas broke ties with Ms Arroyo along with Drilon.

Tupas earlier said he was not invited to the meeting in Cebu City. But Vice Gov. Roberto Armada, who supports the President, was there, representing Iloilo.

Marañon sent Vice Gov. Isidro Zayco and authorized him to sign the resolution on his behalf.

"We will form the separate republic if the President is ousted through extra-legal and unconstitutional means," Antique Gov. Salvador Zaldivar-Perez told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

She said they would not recognize a junta, transition council or a government installed through a people's uprising.

ARMM bets under tight watch

COTABATO CITY—Commission on Elections officials are monitoring campaign activities in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) to ensure that candidates strictly adhere to the election code.

But candidates for governor have surprisingly been restrained in their campaign speeches, limiting only their sorties on presentation of issues and concerns confronting the ARMM.

Bai Diana Datu-Imam, Marawi City acting election registrar, said candidates and political parties were earlier urged to adhere closely to the election code.

Datu-Imam also said the Comelec will closely adhere to its mandate to stay neutral and non-partisan during the Aug. 8 elections.

ARMM officials claimed that candidates in the provinces of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Sulu, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and Marawi City, were restrained

in their campaign speeches.

"There has been no mudslinging in the campaign sorties of different parties so far," said Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar.

Akbar has been encouraging all candidates for governor and their respective slates to adhere to the Islamic concept of political campaign, which forbids exchanges of accusations and criticisms just to embarrass and defeat rivals.

The first and second regional elections in 1990 and 1993, re-

spectively, were highlighted with excessive mudslinging and political bickering by the different parties that pitted candidates for elective positions.

Marine Gen. Mohammad Ben Dolorfino, chief of the interim Task Force Hope (honest, orderly and peaceful elections) said the Southern Command, the ARMM police and the Comelec will tightly secure all so-called "areas of immediate concern" during the

elections.

In Jolo, Sulu, three major task groups composed of eight battalions and groups of policemen in place for the upcoming ARMM elections.

Task Force Comet chief Brig. Gen. Alexander Aleo said the deployment of these units to Sulu was made to ensure that "we'll have a well managed and relatively peaceful election." Jeffrey Maitem and Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Youth, execs tapped in Cavite bid to clean up coastal areas

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

KAWIT, Cavite—Alarmed by the deteriorating state of the coastal areas and marine resources of this province, Gov. Erineo "Ayong" Maliksi on Friday led more than 6,000 Caviteños in a major clean-up of coastal communities in this town.

Armed with rakes and sacks, the volunteers, made up mostly of students and local government officials, trooped to four clean-up stations in Island Cove, Barangay Gahak and Epza Road as early as 5 a.m.

Maliksi said the event was just the start of a regular province-wide clean-up campaign dubbed "Oplan Linis C.A.V.I.T.E. (Cavite Alliance of Volunteers' Initiative Towards Environment), which will be

conducted twice a month.

"With this program, we will rally the people towards preserving, protecting and restoring the marine resources of Cavite," he told the INQUIRER.

He said they decided to enjoin the support of students and the youth to serve as a "wake-up call to all callous residents who continue to destroy the environment."

He said the pile of garbage and animal manure in the area had contaminated the waters of Cavite and had even caused several incidents of fish kill in the past.

"I, myself, witnessed how the coastal waters in Cavite had deteriorated because of irresponsible residents dumping their garbage in the water. As the governor, it is my duty to end this practice," Maliksi said.

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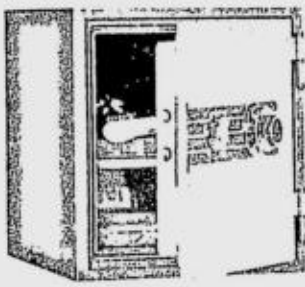
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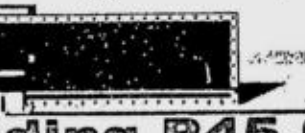
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Benguet execs say local veggie farmers not ready to go global

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Officials here said the country's trade liberalization policy would hurt the local vegetable industry once tariff restrictions on imports were lifted.

Gov. Borromeo Melchor said industry leaders expressed fears that local vegetable farmers might not be ready to face the effects of a free market that allowed the entry of imported vegetables.

"Our farmers must therefore brace themselves for the entry of vegetable imports that will surely compete for buyers in the local market," he said.

The future of the local vegetable industry was one of the major issues discussed during Melchor's state of the province address on Tuesday at the provincial capitol here.

He said highland vegetable farmers must be prepared by adopting measures that will cut down on farm inputs and improve the presentation of vegetables as market products.

The province is the country's top producer of temperate vegetables—cabbage, potato, carrot, Chinese pechay and broccoli.

"The farmers are being made aware of the reality that sooner or later, free trade will affect the market flow of their products," Melchor said.

Lolita Bentes, provincial agriculturist, said local farmers are not yet ready to match for-

eign vegetables in the international market.

"The farmers are not ready to compete globally," she said. "That's why we are preparing the farmers to look for domestic alternatives to caution the impact of foreign competition."

Planting of fruit trees and cut flowers, like carnation and tulip, looked promising but it will be up to the farmers to determine their best products, she said.

Vice Gov. Cresencio Pacalso said local legislation could help a lot in maintaining farmers' income despite the threat posed by imported vegetables. He said Benguet's major vegetable producing towns—Buguias, Tublay, Atok and Kibungan—must regulate the excessive use of pesticides to cut down on farm costs.

He said local governments could push farmers to shift to organic farming and adopt crop programming.

Melchor said the farmers must be trained to be globally competitive. "The farmers must be trained on how to properly package their vegetables. They must also learn to process their vegetables so that they can be sold at a higher price," he said.

He said the provincial government is applying for a loan from the Development Bank of Philippines to help farmers in the province.

Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau



COTABATO COLORS

Dancers from 11 towns of South Cotabato, among them these young Bla'an natives, participate in the 6th Tinalak Festival Monday (July 18) in Koronadal City.

(JEFFREY MATTEMPDI MINDANAO BUREAU)

SWS survey says corruption in Davao increasing

By Judy Quiros

PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Among five key cities in the country, Davao has emerged to have an increasing corruption incidence where private companies use bribes to win government contracts, the 2005 Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey of enterprises on corruption showed.

SWS Chair Mahar Mangahas presented the results of the 5th SWS business enterprise survey on corruption before various sectors, led by the Mindanao Business Council (MBC), at the Grand Men Seng Hotel yesterday.

He said the survey, which was conducted from Jan. 21 to March 15 this year, covered the metro areas of Manila, Cebu and Davao, Cavite-Laguna-

Batangas (Calaba) and in the cities of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan.

Results of the survey showed that a significant number of managers say their companies were asked for bribes in relation to getting local government and national government permits and licenses, paying income taxes, complying with import regulations, collecting receivables from the govern-

ment, supplying the government with goods and services, and availing of government incentives.

The rate of solicitation of bribes by the private sector in the area of getting local government permits/licenses in Metro Davao steadily increased over five years at an average of 9 percent in 2000 to 39 percent in 2005.

In the area of getting national

government permits, bribe solicitation in Davao also grew from 18 percent in 2004 to 29 percent in 2005; collecting receivables from government from 13 percent to 26 percent; and availing of government incentives from 2 percent to 17 percent.

MBC vice chair Romeo Serra, who is also Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. (PCCI) regional governor for

Southeastern Mindanao, said the increasing incidence of bribe solicitation in Davao would be a deterrent to the entry of investors and could lead to an image problem for the city.

Serra, however, said MBC has yet to look at the SWS report. "We have to interpret the data," he said. MBC Chair Antonio Santos expressed disgust over the results of the survey.

Caticlan airport back to normal

By Nestor Burgos Jr.

PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Operations at the Caticlan Airport in Malay, Aklan resumed late Tuesday afternoon after its runway was cleared of a commercial plane whose rear wheel collapsed while landing on the airport.

The operations resumed at 5:14 p.m. after the Russian-made Yak-40 jet-powered plane was towed from the tarmac to the airport ramp, said Efrén Nagrama, Air Transportation Office (ATO) manager in Caticlan.

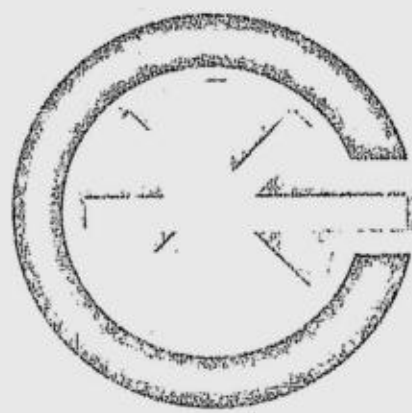
The airport operation was suspended at 9:58 a.m. Tuesday after the right rear wheel of the 36-seat plane (not 32-seat as earlier reported), operated by Interisland Airline, collapsed while landing at the airport.

The 20 passengers, mostly Koreans bound for the island-resort of Boracay, and three crew members were safely evacuated a few minutes after the plane stopped at the middle of the 30-meter wide and 950-meter long tarmac.

The ATO's safety division was still finalizing its report on the incident. But Nagrama said initial investigation showed that the rear landing gears fell short of the runway and landed on the soil portion at the tip of the tarmac.

The plane swerved counter-clockwise and made a 180-degree turn facing the direction where it came from before it made a complete stop on the runway, said Nagrama.

The airport in Caticlan, the jump-off point to Boracay, is one of the busiest in the country. It averages 18 incoming and 18 outgoing flights daily.



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INQUIRER *Southern Luzon*

Editor Jun Bandyayel
Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

Mindoro inmates get into business

By Madonna Virola
Calapan City

THE ASSISTANT warden of the Oriental Mindoro provincial jail (OMPJ) smiles as he surveys what is happening in his turf.

"In my almost 10 years' work here, it is only now that no major conflict has [erupted] because the inmates are busy," said Ferdinand Ferancullo.

After boosting kite-flying as a hobby in Calapan City, the inmates have shifted to making bamboo frames for utility and novelty products, which will be displayed and sold at the Department of Tourism's WOW Philippines fair in Intramuros, Manila, this week.

The frames are to be used for jewelry boxes, piggy banks and religious images.

The City Trade and Industry Office and the Technology Livelihood Development Center have invited the inmates to participate in the national showcase.

Credit the endeavor to the provincial warden, retired Col. Rolando Olat Gonzales, who has encouraged the prisoners to engage in livelihood projects by lending them his own money at no interest.

Inmates in five of the facility's eight cells are the beneficiaries.

The rest are busy running their own livelihood ventures—a small dry goods store, cooking meals by the women's group, lamination and laundry services, and making abaca thread for export.

Gonzales gave a P1,000 capital to



INMATES produce tambo frames for utility and novelty products, which are now on display and sold at the Department of Tourism's WOW Philippines fair in Intramuros, Manila.

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each of the inmates.

After undergoing medical checkup, about 20 inmates tasked with food preparation will attend a seminar on sanitation as part of their project. The city health office will handle the seminar.

Laundry man Romeo Manggao earns P200 every two weeks. He charges P5 for pants and P2 for shirts.

He and nine others in the business of washing clothes only learned about the service in jail, as their wives usually do the laundry for them. Each inmate has a clothesline in the compound.

Other prisoners make abaca strings, which are sold at 60 centavos per meter.

"The strings are made as accessory for wine bottles," said Ruel de Castro, who has connections with an export outlet in Rome.

Each week, the inmates produce 1,000 meters of abaca strings, earning P600.

"With plenty of projects, only the lazy ones will not earn here. Some of them are even better off than those outside and without a job," said Ferrancullo.

The facility has 334 inmates, 31 of them women.

It has separate cells for women, youths and political detainees.

Those interested in the inmates' projects may contact the OMPJ at 043-286-7154.

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One shot

THE OPPOSITION is preparing up to 10 criminal charges, including electoral fraud and graft and corruption, against President Macapagal-Arroyo. Opposition lawmakers, assisted by private lawyers, are scrambling to gather evidence, line up witnesses and prepare the charges to be included in the impeachment complaint they will file in the House of Representatives immediately after Ms Arroyo delivers her

EDITORIAL State of the Nation Address at the opening of the session on Monday. "Our charges against her would revolve around the crimes of cheating, lying and stealing," said House Minority Leader Francis Escudero.

Impressive? Maybe yes—to an impressionable public. But though it may be useful to marshal a whole array of allegations and charges to win the battle for public opinion, such a shotgun approach is really unnecessary, counterproductive and dilatory if the objective is to impeach Ms Arroyo and strip her of the presidency quickly. In an impeachment case, it doesn't matter whether the accused is found guilty of one crime or a dozen ones. Either way, all the punishment she will suffer is the loss of her high office.

One well-prepared, well-supported and well-argued case is all it takes to achieve this objective, so it's a waste of time and effort to file so many other charges that may prove hard to substantiate in the end. If the opposition wants to have an early resolution of this crisis, it should dispense with pyrotechnics, like filing so many charges, and focus on a couple or at most, a handful that can be built into solid cases.

Ironically, the more promising ones may not even directly involve the allegation that triggered the crisis—electoral fraud—since the most damaging proof of that available now is an illegal wiretap which cannot be used in legal proceedings. But there are some constitutional experts, Fr. Joaquin Bernas, S.J., among them, who say that just talking to an election official (which the President has publicly admitted) at such a critical time, already constitutes betrayal of public trust.

What would be less debatable is direct testimony given by persons who may have known first-hand certain presidential actions and decisions tainted by graft and corruption. If even just one of the seven Cabinet members who resigned last July 8 were to start talking about some shady transactions he or she personally knew about, the President could be in deeper trouble than she already is.

The opposition knows this very well. San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora, who is heading the opposition's legal team, said he was confident that some of them would testify against the President. Imelda Nicolas, former chair of the National Anti-Poverty Commission, said she and others among the so-called Hyatt 10 were willing to testify "if we know something relevant to the charges." Former Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman had earlier said she was ready to testify under oath. One former Cabinet member, who didn't want to be identified, said some of those in their group knew about some questionable transactions, particularly with regard to the disbursement of disaster relief funds allegedly for political purposes.

Unless the opposition has other more substantial proof of official wrongdoing, whether in connection with the elections or misuse of public funds, it cannot go wrong if it concentrated its effort on securing the cooperation of these officials, who were once in a position to participate in delicate discussions. They might even have been party to some questionable decisions and illegal transactions. And they seem convinced that the way to save the nation is to bring the Arroyo administration down. Having failed once when their demand for the President's resignation was ignored, will they go for broke and tell everything they know?

The answer could very well hinge on how much they can trust the opposition to follow the Constitution. One key proposal the resigned Cabinet members made was that power be handed over to the constitutional successor: Vice President Noli de Castro. Removing the President through impeachment should pave the way for such an orderly transition. But is the opposition ready to accept such an outcome?



Age of disruption

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado



IS this country coming apart at the seams?

Yes, if one listens to shrill voices battling to topple—or retain—the President. But collapse could come from neglected problems that escalated while leaders, out in the streets, failed to govern.

It's been 47 days since the wiretapped tapes scandal erupted. In that period, an estimated 272,600 babies were born—the equivalent of a million on to a population, now estimated at over 84 million.

In the same period, debt increased by over P43.2 billion. But 147,800 Filipinos didn't wait. They made a beeline for countries abroad.

Abroad, oil hovers at the high \$50s per barrel. Al-Qaida threatens us. An Asian version of the Cuban missile crisis looms in Korea.

Yet, the President's energy and funds are depleted for political survival, the opposition fumes. And all the opposition's time and resources go to toppling the President, Ms Arroyo's allies snap back.

Is this what Barbara Tuchman calls "The Age of Disruption"?

In that bind, leaders find time, imagination and resources sapped by escalating emergencies. The "tyranny of the urgent" handcuffs policy and programs. Few look beyond the horizon.

"Nobody's minding the store," warns Sen. Joker Arroyo. Congress is strapped with overlapping volatile tasks: the 2006 budget, impeachment of the President and constitutional overhaul.

After the President delivers her State of the Nation Address on July 25, she'll submit to Congress her legislative agenda plus the 2006 budget.

All cross their fingers there will be no rerun of the 2004 failure to approve a budget. And in 2005, the budget scraped through five minutes before midnight. But is anybody home?

In Congress, Senators Sergio Osmeña and Manuel Villar wring media mileage with threats to stalk out of the Sona. Outside, both sides gear up for yet another rally.

The opposition seeks to scrub the gains posted by the larger and restrained administration road show at Luneta. Spokesmen, like the smooth Francis Escudero, pitch for those who've held back so far, from the middle and upper classes to business and religious groups.

None welcome a revival of the Erap kleptocracy or a Maoist regime. They're essential for effecting change in government. But the opposition's radical left and allies spook already wary people with their red banners, Viet-Cong style logos on websites and forcible break-ins.

"Decked out in his Maoist fatigue cap with a Maoist red star, an agriculture department demonstrator signaled...they'll fulfill their end of the Faustian bargain struck with Jejomar Binay, JV Ejercito and opposition *trapos*," writes columnist Antonio Abaya. "The Maoists have given us a sneak preview of what they intend to do."

But is this what the opposition wants? Or does it seek to address effectively problems like stagnating per-capita government spending?

In 1975, it was P434. Today it's an inadequate P10,000 plus—in devalued pesos. Crippled services persist even as the top half of the population corner 82 centavos out of every peso. The other half make do with 18 centavos. Thus, we are a people of "deferred hopes."

Impeachment and Charter change dangling term extensions could derail the budget. Resistance to temptation is not the strength of Congress. But a reenacted budget will further weaken an already wobbly economy. The vulnerable—children and mothers—will draw the short straw again.

"Many things we need can wait," Nobel laureate Gabriel Mistral wrote. "The child cannot."

Now is the time his bones are being formed, his mind developed. To him, we can not say tomorrow. His name is today."

Working out of Makati, editor Bernadette Parco, probably articulates the desire of many citizens seeking lowered voices and more commitment. Here's an abridged version of her call now on the Internet:

People urge the "ultimate sacrifice for the good of the country." That we can endorse. No, not the call for the President to resign, but for everyone to sacrifice.

The 10 Cabinet members who resigned: Let your record of integrity speak for itself. Sacrifice by shutting up. Franklin Drilon: Salivating for the vice presidency leaves a bad taste in the mouth and you manifested political opportunism. Sacrifice by stopping your Liberal Party maneuvering.

Imee Marcos, Jinggoy Estrada, JV Ejercito: Is it not enough that your parents plundered the nation? You kept the loot and are in power. You're a major reason why middle forces don't respond to the call to a change in government. Sacrifice by removing yourselves from the stage.

Bro. Eddie Villanueva: Your entry into politics is between you and God. But to insist you won the elections! For goodness sake, you were number five! Did GMA and the others as well cheat you? Sacrifice by focusing on the Father's business.

Catholic activist bishops and clergy: Sacrifice by sticking to your pastoral duties and leave politics to the laity.

All traditional politicians: *Kayo ang tunay na salot ng bayan*. Sacrifice by resigning and fading into complete oblivion.

Big business: Many of you really care about having a positive environment so your enterprises thrive. Sacrifice some of your profits to share more with the poor.

The poor: We understand that *sapagkat kayo ay kapit sa patalim*, you're brought to rallies by politicians. Sacrifice by maintaining your dignity. And help sow the seed for true liberation and well-being, in God's time.

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How long can she last?

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



THE WAY GMA's people have been advertising it, the longer this crisis lasts, the better it will be for her. The better she will be able to ride the crest, the better she will be able to consolidate her forces, the better she will be able to recover the trust she has lost. The longer this lasts, they say, the more the forces arrayed against her will dissipate and the more the forces rising to her defense will grow. It's just a question of time.

Well, yes, it is a question of time. But time is not on GMA's side. What we are looking at today is the twilight years of the Marcos regime in a much abbreviated form. Marcos lasted several years in these circumstances even while being ravaged by lupus on the side. But he was Marcos, this is Gloria. While they may share the same scale of ambition and ruthlessness, they differ in one fundamental respect, which is that Marcos had the (overstaying) generals in his pocket. GMA does not, and that's what's going to make her twilight years twilight weeks. But like Marcos during his twilight years, GMA faces the same insoluble problem, which is: How do you continue ruling a country that doesn't like you?

GMA's tack has been to talk about the economy to divert talk from politics. That was the same thing Marcos did, but Marcos had more credibility. Marcos at least could point to the 1970s when the economy was fairly stable. GMA cannot point to any time in her term when the economy did well. Despite borrowing more than Ramos and Erap combined, which have condemned us and our children and their children to a life of indebtedness, all she has to show for it is an economy about to tumble like Argentina.

Marcos did launch a massive livelihood program during his twilight years called KKK, named after Bonifacio's revolutionary group. It did recall its illustrious precedent in an ironic sense. A joke went around that three people borrowed money from the KKK to put up small businesses. The first one went into piggery and became bankrupt; a pestilence swept over his brood and he lost everything. The second went

into planting coconut and he too became bankrupt, and what little he had left after paying for farm inputs Danding Cojuangco stole with his coconut levy. The third however became a millionaire, and he didn't have to spend much. He had a bust of Marcos made in his backyard and he charged different fees for different things: P10 for slapping the bust, P20 for pounding it with a fist, and P50 for pissing on it. He never lacked for a queue in front of his house.

GMA launches a livelihood program, she will create many millionaires.

Like Marcos, GMA's problem isn't just that she can't be trusted, it's that she can't be believed. Marcos lied about everything from his medals to his lupus, GMA has lied about everything from her plan to run for president to her plot to cheat for president. Marcos lied about everything from the state of his kidneys to the state of his nation, GMA has lied about everything from the state of her soul to the state of her nation.

Marcos himself tried a makeover, making his "smiling martial law" smile some more by presumably lifting it in 1981. No one believed him. And in any case, nothing changed, except the, well, not inconsiderable lifting of curfew (which, if I recall right, was at 1 a.m. then, a concept today's kids have trouble grasping), which was a direct boon to San Miguel—it allowed us to drink more beer up to the wee hours of morning.

GMA has tried to put on a smiling face in lieu of a dour one. No one believes her, and nothing has changed, except, well, the not inconsiderable entertainment of watching the local version of Michael Jackson transform into a mask. GMA's problem isn't just that she

isn't a good actress with a horrible script: Look at how she did with her apology and with that follow-up of sending her husband into exile, which got plastered with rotten tomatoes by the public. It's also that there is a really good actress around who is Susan Roces. The contrast is, well, dramatic.

But what's really making the clock tick, and tick faster each day, for GMA is that like Marcos she is sitting on a seat that doesn't belong to her. What makes today a throwback to the twilight days of Marcos and not of Erap's is the issue of legitimacy. It won't go away. Erap at least could claim to have been voted into office, and by the biggest margin of all. Marcos couldn't (after martial law) and neither can GMA. Marcos ruled by decree, GMA rules by deceit. Marcos ruled by force, GMA rules by farce.

By 1985, you knew Marcos' time was up. It was just a question of when the weight of his internal baggage would collapse in on him or when the horde massed at the gates would break them, or both. By now, 2005, you know GMA's time is up. It's just a question of when the remaining Cabinet members and local officials will see the writing on the wall and heed it or when her opponents will start employing civil disobedience to force her out, or both.

Marcos did contemplate one last-ditch effort, which was to round up his enemies, just as he did at the beginning of martial law. And failing that he sent tanks to raze down the military mutineers. But he balked at the last minute when faced with a resolute populace and an angry world. GMA's people at least have been making noises in that respect, Raul Gonzalez chief among them. I do hope he holds on to his position, he is the most effective secretary right now—for the other side. Will she balk as well when faced with a resolute populace and an angry world? Or will she go past even Marcos there?

Paul Laxalt did have one very good advice for Marcos at that point: Cut, and cut cleanly.

I've never thought that was an advice, I've always thought that was a threat.

'Sala sa lamig, sala sa init' for GMA

ON THE ISSUE of setting up a Truth Commission, President Macapagal-Arroyo is *sala sa init, sala sa lamig*. The Catholic bishops have pushed for its creation, and so have many other sectors, including businessmen as well as some administration officials who have resigned. At first, GMA was non-committal but the badgering continued. Now that she has approved the setting up of the commission, she's reaping brickbats. The opposition now decries that it won't be credible as she would be appointing its members, while others say it would duplicate the job of Congress that's now gearing up for impeachment.

I can see the problem of having two parallel moves which could end up diverging at some point. One valid point being raised by various quarters is, assuming that administration allies succeed in killing the impeachment move against GMA in the House, thus foiling a trial by the Senate, wouldn't the work of the commission constitute double jeopardy? This idea could prove even more divisive.

I have been researching on the development of local government units over the past 14 years since the Local Government Code was promulgated, and how local autonomy appears to be ripening as it seems to move inexorably toward some sort of federalism. I am thinking of turning out eventually a little publication on this subject. Hence, my huge interest in what I call the "LGU phenomenon" that came out in the current crisis as a major support pillar for GMA—something unprecedented in past upheavals.

Taking the opportunity to view things from ringside, so to speak, I sat as panelist in two recent TV programs hosted by Secretary Cerge Remonde and Cecile Alvarez, respectively, featuring a group of municipal mayors and another that had three articulate and attractive lady governors: Josie de la Cruz of Bulacan, Salvacion Perez of Antique and Imelda Dimaporo of Lanao del Norte. Running like a thread through all the local executives' thesis is that GMA has their support because she also gave them total support. Perez announced that in a recent meeting in Cebu City,

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



14 Visayan governors issued a manifesto of support for GMA as well as for "the Constitution, democracy and the rule of law." Only two governors didn't sign: Neal Tupas of Iloilo, a Drilon man, and Raul Daza of Northern Samar, once a lawyer of former President Joseph Estrada. On the other hand, Dimaporo reported that Mindanao governors also met in Davao City recently to issue a manifesto of support for the President. I found the governors' moves in the Visayas and Mindanao seemingly out of sync with the survey said to have been conducted by Pulse Asia, which showed that 8 out of 10 Filipinos want GMA out either by resignation, impeachment or unconstitutional means before her term ends in 2010. Could it be that the local execs do not reflect the true sentiment of their people?

Pursuing the subject of how this support for GMA appears to have gelled among LGUs, Perez stressed that the first thing she did when she assumed power in 2001 was to return all the indebtedness of the past administrations to the LGUs, and this meant so much especially to the less developed provinces. This year, said Perez, GMA allocated P10 billion to the provinces as IRA.

Dimaporo said that with GMA's support, her province was able to successfully host the Pambansang Paloro recently, allowing it to shed its old image as a war-torn province. On the other hand, De la Cruz made an interesting point: an indication of support for the beleaguered President in Bulacan is that despite the fact that GMA lost by about 250,000 votes, the Bulakeños want her to be given due process in Congress.

The bigger truth

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo



get to the bigger truth. Only part of it. Only that she was the voice on the "Hello Garci" tape, as she had admitted. That she was talking to Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano; that she, as she had admitted, had committed an indiscretion, blah, blah, blah.

That she, without an iota of doubt, had in fact cheated or influenced the results of last year's elections in order to win or increase her edge over the late Fernando Poe Jr.; that she had actually lost to FPJ by either a small or large margin—these we will never know if a fact-finding body does not arrive at the bigger truth or if an impeachment process never takes place.

Who's afraid of a Truth Commission? Who's afraid of an impeachment process? An elaborate lie is not easy to spin or spawn. The truth is not easy to find.

The wiretapped conversations, even if technologically proven to be authentic—and with all its semantic and linguistic undertones and overtones, unspoken between-the-lines suggestions, as well as clear intelligible statements, which could be interpreted at face value—do not have the entire truth, if you ask me, only part of it.

As a citizen, I want more. If not the entire truth, at least the bigger truth.

I want more than just the President stepping down if she is found guilty of cheating and of the other offenses she is being accused of. I want more. I am not inclined to give her a quick exit, be it graceful, disgraceful or inglorious. That would be too convenient for both her and those who accuse her. As a citizen, I want a deliberate, even if slow and arduous process at arriving at the bigger truth.

I want more. If not the entire truth, at least the bigger truth.

Casablanca Commission

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



not themselves God; and so unlike Paul, the President, even in the face of the prelate's displeasure, can still bargain with them. Bargaining, after all, is one of the stages of grief. Even political grief.

We've seen two already: denial, in the face of the accusations (this isn't happening to me!); and anger, in which she lashed out at her Cabinet, and the politics of our country (why is this happening to me?). The President is now bargaining: impeachment, yes! Commission no! Wait, impeachment, maybe, later; why not commission now, or at the same time! (and, I promise I'll be a better person if...). Depression (I don't care anymore) and acceptance (I'm ready for whatever comes) seem just over the horizon. The collapse of the Nixon administration was accompanied by a similar psycho-social collapse on the part of the American president.

So, now, our President is bargaining, hoping to buy time. Quite a few sober people are inclined to give the President time, not out of a desire to help her, but simply to make the case against her more iron-tight. One suggestion comes from lawyer Katrina Legarda, who favors a fact-finding commission because, if it does find the President culpable of violating her oath of office, it will ensure a swift and successful impeachment trial.

It seems to me, that timing is everything in politics. The timing of the President's sudden arrival at Damascus seemed a bit stage-managed; if it took the Archbishop of Manila to make pointed clarifications (that his fellow bishops hadn't absolved the President to stop her from claiming otherwise), then the credibility of the chief executive is low indeed.

At a recent social gathering where there was a sprinkling of alumnae of the Assumption Convent, the topic inevitably turned to "Bloody July 8." Everyone knows that former President Cory Aquino attended the noon Mass that day for the alumnae and student body. But at that social gathering, I learned that Ms Aquino, accompanied by her daughters, came half an hour earlier for the purpose of talking to the sisters about making her famous "Gloria Resign" statement right after the Mass. Among those with her was Milla Drilon, wife of the Senate president. Had Ms Aquino been able to read that statement at Assumption, it would have created a bigger propaganda impact since GMA is Assumption-educated all the way to college where she graduated magna cum laude and even taught there for a while. Interestingly, ABS-CBN was the only radio-TV network at the school that noon.

I learned that the Assumption sisters refused to allow Ms Aquino to read it, and I suspect the reason is that they did not want to be drawn into the political arena. Moreover, it would have been embarrassing for everyone, as perhaps half the alumnae present would have walked out. In her brief remarks before the assembled churchgoers after the Mass, she hinted about being unable to get her message across there. Later she read it from the Cojuangco Building with full media coverage.

Some former Cory officials have pounced on Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez for his criticisms of her moves, and GMA herself has apologized to Kris Aquino for his lack of gallantry. I personally found Raul's remarks on Kris uncalled for, as this is an entirely family matter (over the months and years I have studiously avoided commenting on controversies that have hounded this young woman even when the whole world seemed to have had its say on her behavior). But the political criticisms of Ms Aquino, such as her poor record in disciplining some of her relatives in alleged corruption cases during her watch, are not unfair because she has chosen to enter the political arena. She can't attack and then cry foul when she herself is attacked.

I don't want a quick fix, not because I am afraid of Vice President Noli de Castro. If the President resigns or is bodily dragged out of Malacañang, by all means, De Castro should take over. He should not be bullied into stepping down if he has not been proven to be involved in something disgraceful or criminal while he was vice president.

I want more. I want to know the what, where, when, why and how.

For me, here is the small place to start. Where did the tape come from? Who ordered the illegal wiretapping of the conversation between the President and Garcillano?

Why was it done? Were there intelligence reports that cheating might be committed so that the wiretappers decided to break the law in order to uphold the law (against electoral fraud)?

I want to know more about the etymology and epidemiology—to use tongue-twisting metaphors—of these pieces of evidence. In other words, the fuller tale of the tape so suddenly sprung by persons so suddenly out of sight.

Who were the persons involved in this activity? Sure, they'll be damned, but so surely, too, the President be. Where, when, how was the wiretapping done? Who else were wiretapped? (Any squealers?)

The old question I will keep on asking: Why was the tape released only now? FPJ died six months after the elections, or six months ago. Why was the tape—illegally acquired though it was—not presented when FPJ was alive, when it could have meant electoral victory for him?

This is not to deflect the focus on the culpability of the President. If she is found guilty, she should be bodily brought to the exit door.

Those who dismiss the questions as old hat or as small are not after the bigger truth. These are not just about whether Ms Arroyo cheated or not. These could lead to bigger questions and answers. Questions like, how have we come to this?

The truth is bigger than the sum of its small parts.

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Hooked on books

I MUST be one of a mere handful of 16-year-olds in the world who have filled their houses with books. If you come to our house, you will see some books scattered around the living room. Books are also scattered in the five bedrooms that aren't even mine, and there's quite a lot of them stored on the six bookshelves and the linen cabinet that my father bought in an effort to keep my books in the right place.

Yes, I am a bibliomaniac. I love books with a maniacal intensity. I love to hold them in my hands, feel the covers, anticipate the stories they tell, and smell the woodsy scent of their pages. Once I sit down to read, my mind quickly detaches itself from my body and follows the plot of the book. For hours on end, I am in this state, euphorically absorbing new ideas, fantastic tales and useful information like a sponge.

I love books so much that I can't leave a bookstore without buying anything. I know what you're thinking: What a nerd! Ooookay. I've already imagined myself in a book rehab program and confessing: "Hi, my name is Raisia, and I'm addicted to books. The last time I held a book was two minutes ago..."

But seriously, I stopped being a nerd four years ago. That came about when I realized I couldn't read books 24/7 without alienating my friends. I ended my obsession with trying to read everything that had been written, because the idea was simply ridiculous. Instead, I started on a new mission, which was to get my family to read.

My family never read anything but newspapers before. Mom and Dad read the front page and sometimes the entertainment section, while my brother Mico looked at the cell phone ads. I wanted to change that. I wanted to make them see that there's a whole world right on their fingertips. They can grow so much and be productive in their spare time.

I started with my Dad. I had just read "The Da Vinci Code," which was relatively still unknown in this country back then. Whenever we talked, I told him about weird facts I gathered from the book: about pi, the divine number, the Mona Lisa, the Last Supper, the Rose Line.

After some time, he became interested and asked for the book. He finished it in two days, and he kept talking about it afterwards.

I continued to push him in the right direction. "You know, Dad," I told him, "Dan Brown has three other books. Maybe you should try them." Next thing I knew he had finished reading "Angels and Demons," "Deception Point" and "Digital Fortress" and was pressing Mom and me to read them. He read the first book of the "Dark Tower" series, "The Gunslinger," without being prompted afterwards, and continued to read other books.

What made me most happy was when Dad took me and Mico to lunch with his lawyer friends, and one of them remarked: "Everyone tells me you're the best reader in the office!"

Dad smiled and replied, "You know why? It's all because of my daughter right here."

With that, my mission was completed. Next was Mom.

I didn't have a hard time getting her to read. When she mentioned that she didn't have anything to do at the office after she finished her work, I gave her Nicholas Sparks' "Message in a Bottle." She hesitated, but read it anyway. Right after finishing it, she tearfully asked me for another book to lose herself in. "The Da Vinci Code" was dutifully handed to her, and, like Dad, she devoured all of Dan Brown's novels along with two others by Nicholas Sparks. Within a month, she was pressing me and my brother to read "Who Ate My Cheese?" and had started her own mini library in her office.

I had a really hard time convincing Mico to pick up the habit. He automatically rejected every book I gave him. Harry Potter was ignored. "Sword of Truth" and "Redwall," too. "Alice in Wonderland" was definitely out of the question. And he read only three pages of "Lord of the Rings" before putting it back on the bookshelf. It took me about a year to get him to read a book he would like, and that godsend of a book was a battered paperback edition of "The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe" by C.S. Lewis.

Our television set broke down that fateful summer day, and since it was hot, we both were broke, and there really was nothing else to do, Mico picked up the book. He probably thought it was one of those abridged books for children. He finished the book in a single day, and told me he liked it. I told him he might like reading the rest of the "Narnia Chronicles," but he didn't like the idea of reading six more books.

As luck would have it, his English teacher assigned the class to do a book report on a classic novel. Mico found "The Catcher in the Rye" at home and saw it was slim enough to finish in a few days. He loved the book so much that he wanted to read something more. He finally tried out the Harry Potter series, and as of today he has read most of the books I recommended to him.

His grades improved a bit after he started reading books, and he even won in a general information contest at school. And he is even into writing now, and wants to write for his school paper.

Thank God, I got my family to read. They are now able to discuss books with me. There is less complaining and whining about getting bored during summer vacations, and we have more interesting conversations. We are able to do something together as a family, making us closer and more tightly knit. We were even looked up to by people who cannot find the energy to read a novel. Reading improved us all. Reading has become an everyday miracle.

Raisia Mae Rojas, 16, is a BA Public Administration freshman at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

THEY SAID

Books

"People educate themselves and deal with change throughout their lives. And the way to do that is to update themselves with books."

—A chief executive officer of Crosswords Bookstores in India, on Indians being No. 1 among the world's bookworms

Calm discernment

[The public should] respond to the evolving political scenario with sobriety, calmness, wisdom and discernment, and not be swayed by heightened emotional reaction."

—Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, giving advice regarding the crisis faced by the Arroyo administration

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Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph/blog

PEF's role in the discovery of Philippine eagle family

WE wish to make a clarification in connection with the news story "Farmers discover eagle family in Davao jungle." (PDI, 6/23/05). The discovery was made by Philippine Eagle Foundation (PEF) biologists during an expedition to the forests of Cabuaya, Mati, Davao Oriental, not by the local farmers alone. It was our team who spotted, and subsequently tracked for several days, one of the parent eagles carrying a prey.

While we are very thankful for the support of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the help of the officials and locals of Barangay

Cabuaya, we feel that it is only proper to give our team of experts due credit for their efforts, which led to the discovery of the eagles. Biologists Glen Bueser and Medel Silvana, field technician Adriano Oxales III, and volunteer biologist Wayne Hsu deserve credit for their hard work.

Nevertheless, our team's work would not have been possible without the enthusiastic support of the people of Cabuaya. We laud their community for their commitment to preserving our national bird. The Cabuaya nest is one of the critical research sites under the foundation's two conservation pro-

jects in the Eastern Mindanao Corridor (EMC). By focusing on the EMC, we protect one of the last remaining forest blocks in the country, preserving both the eagle and the forest resources in the area.

We at the Philippine Eagle Foundation have been, for decades, in the forefront of eagle conservation and research. We remain committed to the cause of preserving our national treasures and resources.

—DENNIS I. SALVADOR,
executive director,
Philippine Eagle Foundation,
VAL Learning Village, Ruby Street,
Marfori Heights, Davao City

There was rigging—of tapes, not of votes

THIS pertains to the latest "expose" on the alleged rigging of the 2004 presidential elections by President Macapagal-Arroyo. The opposition presented taped conversations, allegedly between President Arroyo and Commission on Elections official, to prove that indeed there was rigging of the 2004 votes.

The series of allegations against President Arroyo, First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and Rep. Mikey Arroyo betray the desperation of the members of the opposition. They are afraid that the President would succeed with her reform programs and uplift the country from the economic woes inflicted on the nation when they were in power.

At a time when the country's ratings are going up and the investment climate is getting better,

the opposition has started a dirty war with the objective of destroying the administration and getting itself back in power.

The so-called taped conversations between President Arroyo and a Comelec official are the ones that have been rigged and not the 2004 presidential elections. The opposition never presented the tapes during the canvassing of votes and when Fernando Poe Jr. filed his electoral protest. Why is it presenting the tapes only now when the issue had been settled?

The result of the 2004 presidential elections has been proven statistically correct, not only by actual vote counts but also by scientifically proven pre-election surveys and exit polls conducted on election day itself. No amount of protests or technically manipulat-

ed "evidence" can change this.

In Sean Connery's movie "Rising Sun," the videotape that showed the crime was tampered with to hide the identity of the real culprit. Like in this case, where the contents of the tapes were clearly altered to serve the opposition's destabilization plans, as proven by the obviously scripted actuations and political positioning of opposition leaders immediately after the tapes went public.

Indeed, a crime has been committed not by the Arroyo administration but by those who tapped the phones of the highest official of the land. Again, the country's Constitution has been violated and the perpetrator is the opposition.

—JOSE L. MORENO JR.,
chair, Kilusan ng Mamamayan
para sa Bayan (Kilosbayan),
1327 A. Linao St., Paco, Manila



Let's set our house in order

IN TINA Monson-Palma's TV show "Talk Back" last July 1, I saw lawyer Louie Sison, spokesperson of the Bangon Pilipinas movement of Bro. Eddie Villanueva. What was Sison saying?

In many words, he said that the problem of our country is not political, it's not economics but moral. Was I glad that this once, finally, somebody hit the nail on the head.

But further on, Sison drifted to the Bill Clinton sex scandal. He categorically stated that, "that was an impropriety." I fell off my chair. I double-checked the meaning of "impropriety" in my Webster International. The entry there says "not accordant with propriety or good taste, indecorous."

Was Sison telling us, the people of the Philippines and the world, it is only an act of bad taste, indecorous, for a man (married) to engage in sex with an unmarried girl who was serving as an intern, under the dome of the White House?

No doubt, the most serious problem in our country is moral. If a lawyer of Sison's caliber and a spokesperson of Bangon Pilipinas of the Jesus is Lord Movement has immoral values like these, then we are in for a long haul. We are in a terrible mess.

—MSGR. NICO BAUTISTA,
Tahanan EF-Benita,
Los Baños, Laguna

NTC's threat to media

WE, the members of the Union of Journalists of the Philippines-UP Diliman (UJP-UP), wish to express our grave concern over the alleged wiretapped conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and an official of the Commission on Elections.

The National Telecommunications Commission has ordered radio and television stations, "especially all broadcasters, to be careful and circumspect in the handling of news reportage, coverage of current affairs and discussion of public issues." The NTC has also warned that the broadcast/airing of the tapes would cause the suspension, revocation and/or cancellation of the radio and television stations' licenses or authorizations issued to (them) if the said tapes are found to be "false and/or fraudulent."

As students of journalism, we have been taught of the principles of journalism ethics and mass media law. We believe that

media should only be reprimanded if they show any unfair coverage or unethical practices; until the government could find some, they should not control the media.

The UJP-UP embraces a pro-student and pro-masses stance and inculcates in its members the ethical principles and responsibilities that should govern the practice of the profession. Committed to preparing and training our members to become confident, competent, responsible and principled media practitioners, the UJP-UP is worried about this NTC decision that threatens the Philippine media, not to mention the growing number of unsolved killings of journalists.

Although the NTC decision does not concern us directly, we believe that our future, as would-be media practitioners, is at stake.

—FRANCO EMMAN VON M. CENA,
chair, Union of Journalists
of the Philippines-
UP Diliman, Quezon City

Reverse discrimination

I AM an American living in South Cotabato and I read the INQUIRER every day with avidity because I find its openness and truthfulness very enlightening. I even look forward to the column of Conrado de Quiros although with some degree of trepidation. But he, at least, backs up with facts (sometimes a bit twisted) his anti-American sentiments.

However, Isagani Cruz's piece "Déjà vu" (PDI, 6/25/05) made me wonder how he came up with his opinions. "Betrayal," "duplicitous," "guise of friendship," "high-handedness," "arrogance," "bully-

ing tactics" all done to the "little brown brothers" by the "ugly American" "(who) has in fact become uglier." Then the kicker—he equated the confiscation of propaganda materials and Isafp wiretapping with a "copycat mentality" of a "supposed" friend in the White House.

In America, we'd call this ranting diatribe "reverse discrimination." In Koronadal, my Ilonggo friends would call Justice Cruz "manol" and I'd agree with them.

—CLIFF MICHELENA,
c/o Nodessa, Solis Subd.,
Koronadal, South Cotabato

TALKING HEADS

Mga suking "political analyst" sa dyaryo at TV:
Sino nga ba sila? Meron ba silang kinikilingan?



plus +

Tanong ng Bayan: Ano'ng inaasahan niyo sa SONA?

Ngayong gabi. Alas 10 n.g sa



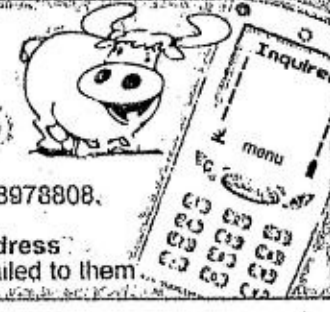
Question of the Week

Do you think the planned image makeover of President Gloria Arroyo into a friendlier, gentler president will work?

Senders of the best 20 texts as published in Tuesday's INQBox will each receive an "Inquirer Shirt!"

Inquirer box
name/age/city/message.
(Maximum of 160 characters)

*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808. Provincial winners can text: Inquirer ad name/age/city/mailling address to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them.



Opposition vows ...

From page A1

lano in which the two purportedly plotted to rig the 2004 presidential elections.

Suplico said the minority bloc was planning to file at least 10 charges against Ms Arroyo.

"We wanted to give ourselves a deadline until tomorrow to whittle down the number of impeachable offenses that we will file against the President. The number we got is increasing, so we decided to reset it (the filing) to Monday," he said.

Suplico declined to elaborate on the charges but House Minority Leader Francis Escudero said earlier this week that the offenses being documented focused on corruption, cheating and betrayal of public trust.

Zamora said the opposition would be able to secure by Monday the signatures of at least one-third of the 236-member House despite efforts by the Arroyo administration and its House allies to block the impeachment process.

At least 79 lawmakers must endorse the impeachment complaint before it could be automatically referred to the 23-member Senate, which will then act as a trial court.

"We are already anticipating that this would go to the Senate. We are close to it (the required votes) and the best evidence is that they are spending left and right," Zamora said.

Financial offers

He said even administration lawmakers, whom the House leadership had been trying to keep within its fold, had been telling the opposition the financial offers and other favors being promised them.

"They tell us not to worry and that they are just having a good time. When the voting comes, they'll be with us," Zamora said.

A ranking administration lawmaker, who declined to be identified, earlier disclosed that the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. chair had telephoned him as well as other members of both the majority and minority blocs as part of a well-funded drive to save the Arroyo presidency.

Calls to solons

Pagcor chair Efraim Genuino yesterday admitted he had been calling up lawmakers—not to meddle in the impeachment process but to follow up on the renewal of the agency's franchise.

"I have been talking with some congressmen in the past regarding the renewal of Pagcor franchise. Other than that, I don't think I can influence the decision of any congressman on other matters," Genuino said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

Another administration lawmaker, who also requested anonymity, said the House "inner circle" had made several offers, including the release of pork barrel funds, to lawmakers to dissuade them from endorsing the impeachment complaint.

On Wednesday, however, other administration lawmakers denounced as "hogwash" allegations that Malacañang and its House allies were out to kill the impeachment complaint.

Shadowy accusers

"We believe the kill impeachment rumors are grossly unfair to administration lawmakers," said Rep. Joel Almarino, chair of the House committee on games and amusement.

"These rumors undermine the integrity of our colleagues in the majority who like the opposition are for truth and justice in the resolution of the issues against the President. These shadowy accusers should come out and substantiate their allegations," Almarino said.

He urged the opposition "to focus on strengthening their case instead of using the majority as scapegoat for their imminent defeat."

Administration Rep. Douglas Cagas said opposition lawmakers were peddling the "kill-impeachment rumors" to deflect attention from their effort to fund destabilization and pro-impeachment moves.

According to him, he had received "reliable reports" that "key opposition figures" were mobilizing funds from deposits of deposited President Joseph Estrada with the Equitable-PCI Bank and Security Bank to "support the im-

peachment" case.

"It's hypocritical of them to accuse Pagcor and administration solons of conniving to kill the impeachment case when they are the ones funding the impeachment and destabilization attempts. They should stop resorting to diversionary tactics to smear administration congressmen," said Cagas.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles called on Pagcor to "stay out of the affairs of the House," even as he stressed there was nothing illegal in the majority bloc's effort to organize itself and prevent the minority from railroading the impeachment process.

"What's wrong with that? The minority has also organized itself and has been going around convincing congressmen to sign the impeachment complaint even without [them being given] the opportunity to read the entire complaint first," he said. "So why can't the majority do the same?"

Nograles said the majority's position was for the House committee on justice to thoroughly study the complaint first before taking any action. "It is also but natural for the minority to do whatever it takes to immediately proceed with the impeachment trial. That's democracy at work," he said.

The House, however, has yet to promulgate its rules on the impeachment process. A heated debate on the impeachment rules is expected when the House opens its regular session on Monday.

More protests warned

Even so, a group of lawmakers on Wednesday warned of more antigovernment rallies—or even a new "people power" revolt—if pro-administration legislators blocked the opposition bid to impeach Ms Arroyo.

Vote-rigging allegations have triggered Ms Arroyo's worst-ever crisis, compounded by resignations of Cabinet members and calls by former allies for her to step down. Ms Arroyo has refused to step down.

Opposition groups initially focused on street protests to pressure Ms Arroyo to resign. But last week, their biggest rally so far drew about 40,000—a mere fraction of the peaceful "people power" revolts that ousted late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and Joseph Estrada in 2001.

Smaller anti-Arroyo protests continue, with activists holding "noise barrage" rallies by banging pots and pans in six places around Metro Manila on Wednesday. Coup rumors still circulate.

Going legal

Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales said many Filipinos were avoiding protests to give the legal system time to defuse the crisis. But she claimed the people would likely turn out if pro-Arroyo lawmakers used their majority to kill the impeachment complaint.

"If people feel they're being shortchanged, if they feel there is deceit and manipulation, they'll go back to the streets," Rosales said.

"It'll be the 'second envelope,'" Rosales said, referring to the refusal of pro-Estrada senators to open a sealed envelope containing crucial evidence during Estrada's impeachment trial. The incident drew massive crowds into Edsa, and Estrada was toppled over alleged corruption and misrule.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said if pro-Arroyo lawmakers used their numbers or a technicality to halt impeachment, "the alternative would be the parliament of the streets."

Many who have urged Ms Arroyo to resign—including ex-ally and former President Corazon Aquino and senior Palace officials who quit—have endorsed constitutional means, including impeachment, to resolve the crisis.

Prosecution team

Zamora said that he and 10 other lawmakers would make up the prosecution team. The prosecutors would be drawn not only from the ranks of the main minority bloc but also from party-list groups and the Liberal Party.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero has been designated manager of the impeachment team and South Cotabato Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio, its secretariat head. *With reports from AP and Reuters*

GMA may testify, says Palace

By Christine O. Avendaño,
Philip C. Tubeza and TJ
Burgonio

MALACAÑANG yesterday raised the possibility that President Macapagal-Arroyo would testify before a commission that would look into election fraud charges against her.

"I have a good feeling that there is good enough reason for her to agree to (appear before) that truth commission," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said, conceding that this was a personal opinion.

He also clarified that the creation of the commission would be done through an administrative order, not an executive order as earlier announced.

Ermita said Malacañang's legal panel was still crafting the order but it was likely it would be patterned after the fact-finding commission that probed the failed 1989 coup attempt against then President Corazon Aquino. It was headed by Hilario Davide.

Ermita said the truth commission would be made up of persons with "stature, probity and proven competence" from business and academe. Retired justices or bishops could be in the group. He said the opposition could also recommend names to the commission.

Asked about opposition's criticism of the initiative, Ermita said: "The important thing is we want to come out with the truth. I

thought this is what they want."

Responding to fears that the commission would affect the planned impeachment proceedings, Ermita said Malacañang's legal staff believed there would be "no inconsistency" between the two initiatives.

Former Supreme Court Justice Cecilia Muñoz-Palma added her voice to those opposing the truth commission, saying it could "pre-empt or weaken the integrity of the impeachment process."

"However, after the impeachment proceedings, a truth commission should be created to analyze and evaluate the findings of the impeachment court," Muñoz-Palma said.

Opposition Representatives Jacinto Paras of Negros Oriental and Rolox Suplico of Iloilo said that the President could face an additional Article of Impeachment—for usurping powers of Congress—if she proceeded with the commission.

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, a stalwart of the administration party Lakas-CMD, said that the President was "ill-advised" in ordering the creation of the panel.

"Not even Congress or the executive can cloak it with power to go into the election returns, unless of course, we amend the Constitution," he said. Under the Constitution, he said only the Supreme Court, sitting as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal,

could hear presidential election complaints.

Pichay also said that the truth commission could not investigate the "Glorigate tapes" since the Anti-Wiretapping Law and Bill of Rights prohibit the use of wiretapped materials in any judicial, quasi-judicial or legislative proceeding.

Rep. Roilo Golez of Paranaque said the key personalities in the commission would be Ms Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, whose whereabouts was unknown. He said if Ms Arroyo intended to tell the whole truth, "she does not need a truth commission."

Rep. Antonio Cuenco of Cebu City said he would still pursue his plan to file a bill creating a truth commission when Congress opened on Monday. He said Representatives Salacnib Bateria of Ilocos Sur and Roque Ablan of Ilocos Norte were co-authors of the bill, which would propose as members of the panel presidents of the CBCP, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, Philippine Constitutional Association and other respected institutions.

"We don't need a truth commission. Let's first give our constitutional processes a chance to try to resolve the problem," said Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, referring to impeachment.

The senator warned that if such institutional process was abandoned, it "would put a strain on the neutrality, apolitical stand" of the Armed Forces.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the proposed commission would only prolong the "people's agony" since this would never mute clamor for Ms Arroyo's impeachment.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said he had nagging questions about the commission, and unless Ms Arroyo satisfactorily answered these, the proposal should be scuttled.

"Will she finally choose the members? Will she finally approve the recommendation and findings? Will she waive her rights under RA 4200? Will she allow Garcillano to cooperate? Will she allow forensic experts to examine the tapes?" he said.

Senators Sergio Osmeña III and Edgardo Angara, however, expressed support for the proposed fact-finding body, saying that this could uncover election irregularities that a strictly formal impeachment proceeding could not.

"Let's hope it's a truth commission, not a liar's commission," Osmeña said.

"I hope she won't be the one to appoint (the members)," UST Rector Fr. Tamerlane Lana told reporters. "I hope it would be the CBCP that will suggest persons of integrity."

The CBCP has been noncommittal to the idea of joining the commission. *With reports from Christian V. Esguerra, Norman Bordadora, Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and PDI Visayas Bureau*

Reds scrap peace talks

From page A1

been suspended several times by either party.

Instead of advancing the peace talks, the administration has sabotaged the negotiations by pressing the NDF to surrender by signing a final peace agreement to end the 36-year-old Marxist insurgency, according to the NDF chief negotiator.

Jalandoni said the administration wanted the NDF to sign a "prolonged ceasefire" before the talks were resumed and a final peace agreement that would call for the surrender of the New People's Army (NPA) and its arms. The NPA is the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), which has been waging a "protracted people's war" since 1968.

Back channels

Jalandoni said Silvestre Bello III, then chair of the government panel, met with the NDF in Utrecht in June last year and held back channel talks last Dec. 16-17 to convince the NDF to sign the peace agreement.

The NDF negotiator said only one of four major items in the peace talks had been tackled and signed—the agreement on the comprehensive human rights and international humanitarian laws.

Jalandoni said the two panels were supposed to resume talks to tackle the second item—the socioeconomic reforms which would have covered 50 percent of the negotiations. The last two items are the political and constitutional reforms and the end of hostilities and dissipation of forces.

Terror list

Jalandoni said the government was also behind the terrorist listing of the CPP/NPA/NDF and CPP founder Jose Ma. Sison by the United States and the European Union to force the NDF to surrender.

"The Arroyo administration is using the terrorist listing to force the NDF to sign a final peace agreement," Jalandoni said.

He said the administration did not act on confidence-building measures that would have ad-

vanced the peace talks.

These are the release of political prisoners, indemnification of the victims of the Marcos regime, and inaction on the killings of militant leaders, including workers in the Hacienda Luisita, a vast sugar estate owned by the family of Aquino.

Jalandoni said the NDF was supporting the removal of Ms Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro whose victory, he said, was also "tainted with fraud."

"The NDF is 'supportive' of the (resignation calls), actually of her ouster. Noli should also not succeed her," Jalandoni said.

Governing council

He said Ms Arroyo's regime "has been mortally wounded since the exposé on the 'Hello Garci' tapes," the wiretapped conversations between the President and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano purportedly showing that she stole the election.

The President "will not last

very long" because the people no longer trust her, according to Jalandoni.

He said De Castro was not a good alternative because his legitimacy would also be questioned.

"What is emerging now is a transitional governing council composed of representatives of a broad sector of patriotic and progressive individuals," the NDF negotiator said.

He said the council would have to call a special election within six months.

"In our view, (party-list Representatives) Satur (Ocampo) and Crispin Beltran would qualify (as council members)," Jalandoni said.

Jalandoni said the NDF would hold a forum on the political crisis in the Philippines in Utrecht at around 4:30 p.m. today, Manila time.

He said the forum would be participated in by the European media, political parties and people "interested in what's happening in the Philippines."

It's still 'House of JDV' but blood may ...

From page A1

tion—on paper.

Barbers said that as far as the lower chamber was concerned, it's still the "House of JDV."

LP members

But the lawmakers acknowledged that several LP members in the House led by Deputy Speaker Benigno Aquino III, administration Representatives Roilo Golez (national defense chair), Robert Jaworski Jr. and Edmund Reyes (basic education), and party-list lawmakers who have bolted the majority coalition "are prepared to face the consequences of their actions."

Solid as a rock

"So there will be no bloody fighting, or jockeying for positions, but just a minor reorganization," said Barbers.

"JDV is solid as a rock. There is not a single gossip of change in leadership. As far as the leadership is concerned, all Lakas mem-

bers will be united in protecting the Speaker," he added.

But he said some Lakas members had already manifested that they'll be independent on certain issues. "Although they belong to the ruling party, it doesn't necessarily follow that they will toe the line as regards the impeachment," Barbers stressed.

"Major political issues can lead to realignment of political forces which, in turn, will lead to reorganization of both Houses. The nature of realignment will depend on the priority now: removal of the President by impeachment. So we don't think it's anyone's priority to remove the Speaker. But that possibility is always there," said Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano.

No fireworks

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, for his part, said there would be no fireworks on Monday.

"Normally, when it's a new

Congress, we convene to elect leaders like the Speaker. But this is not a new Congress, so we don't need to convene in the morning. We will come here in the afternoon to listen to the Sona and the joint session will be adjourned afterward," said Pichay.

The real action would occur in the following days, he said.

Chaotic

"Two things: we will start reorganization probably on Tuesday. Barring any caucus this weekend, there will be no action on Tuesday," said Pichay who, however, said the resignation of Golez et al. from the majority coalition should be approved in plenary session.

"That is the normal circumstance, a consequence of a multiparty system in a bicameral setup. There's still the party-list system. It's really chaotic," he said.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles said the party-list

lawmakers bolting the coalition was nothing new.

"We're used to that. They always voted against the majority on practically all issues," said Nograles.

"My proposal is to hold a majority caucus after the Sona so that we can decide what to do with those with us and no longer with us. The principle is if you are no longer with the majority, you have no business occupying positions allocated to the majority," said Nograles.

But he added: "I'm leaving it up to them to make that decision."

He said the entire week following the Sona would be a busy one, with the chamber tackling the order of business for the third regular session, impeachment and some committee reorganization.

Nograles expects President Arroyo to review her 10-point program.

He also expects Monday's Sona to be "orderly and decent."

Fil-Am actress files raps vs Makati hotel

From page A1

In a phone interview on Wednesday, Barbers said Pico and her family checked in at the hotel and stayed at two suites on July 16 but said they were constantly harassed by the front desk and other hotel staff to pay their bills and were continually asked for their passports and imprints of their credit cards.

It came to the point where the hotel even "held [her] nephews

and nieces captive" to force them to pay their unpaid bills, Barbers said, quoting the complaint.

Mariano Garচিতorena, public relations director of the Manila Peninsula, declined to comment when reached by INQ7.net, saying the hotel has yet to receive a copy of the complaint.

Barbers said that Pico and her family checked out of the hotel on Wednesday, instead of their intended departure on July 25, and paid their hotel bills worth

\$40,000 and P500,000. They are now staying at the Manila Pavilion although Pico is leaving the country on Thursday, the tourism official added.

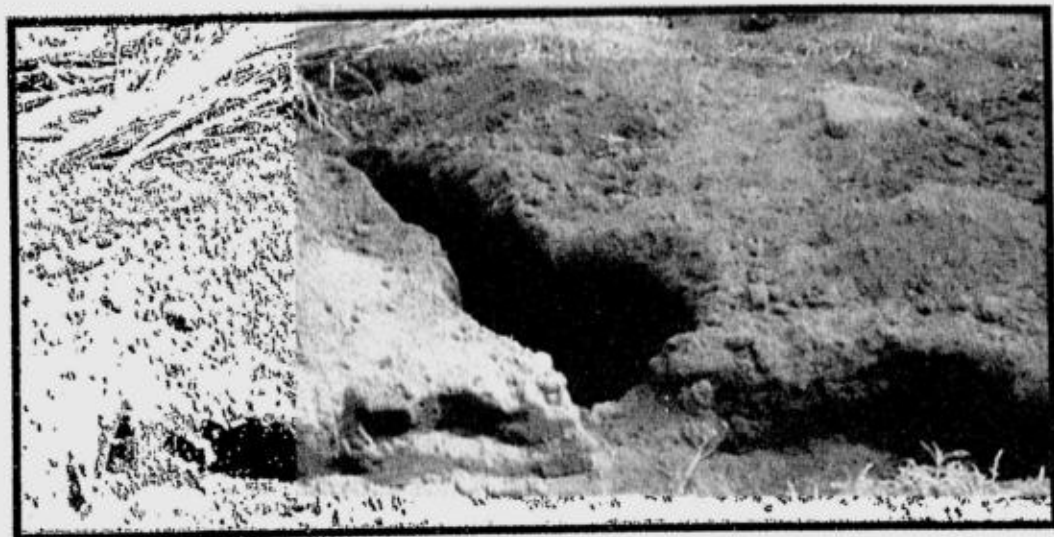
Quoting the Picos, Barbers said an uncle also held his wedding reception at the hotel.

Barbers said the Manila Peninsula would be asked to explain its side. He said it may lose its Department of Tourism accreditation if found guilty of having harassed the Picos.

"We cannot act on their permits because that's under the local government unit. But if they lose their accreditation, it would be a major blow because foreign tourists check which hotels are accredited by the government," he said.

Located in the Makati financial district, the Peninsula is among the high-end hotels in Manila and its lobby is a favorite watering hole of the Philippine elite. *With a report from Dennis Malinawan, INQ7.net*

SOIL EXPOSED



The



On Soil Conservation

Greening the Fields: Persecute that Weed

The soil invests plants with power. Weeds deprive plants of these nutrients. Farmers attempting to get rid of these agricultural terrorists through manual means like tilling, harms the soil and invites soil erosion. We are observing something almost fatally flawed in this cycle: how some ways of weed elimination breeds nothing but a host of farming problems.

Fortunately, leading agribusiness company, Syngenta Philippines, Inc. (Syngenta) is addressing significant agricultural concerns of soil management and soil conservation by investigating various means of weed control to identify the best possible option that will be environmentally friendly, safe to users, cost effective and practical to use.

A multi-party cooperation, the Gramoxone Sagip-Lupa Project consists of various participants from sectors of agricultural and environmental management. The project protocol had been set by the project proponent from the academic sector through Dr. Gil L. Magsino, University Researcher and Head of Extension and Training Division of National Crop Protection, Center of the University of the Philippines, Los Baños. As a leading provider of crop protection and crop solutions in the country, Syngenta aims to contribute its expertise in weed management, as well as other areas of soil conservation, to the agricultural community through the launching of this project.

A Vision of Sustainable Agriculture

In recent studies from China, Shui Jian-guo of the Zhejiang Academy of Agriculture Sciences in Hangzhou, conducted a research entitled "Effects of Different Natural Vegetation Management Measures on Red Soil Erosion in Hilly Orchards." He proposed the cultivation of grass on the JinHua-JuZhou basin, situated in the west central part of Zhejiang Province, to keep soil erosion under control. His conclusions recognized weeding as the most effective means of weed control in the orchard but also pinned this down as the dominant cause of soil erosion in farms. He worked on Clean Tillage (hand weeding) and Sod Culture, wherein tall weeds were cut up to the soil's surface, reducing soil erosion by 70%.

With its emphasis on practicality, Shui Jian-guo's study influenced the Gramoxone Sagip-Lupa Soil Conservation Project in its pursuit to utilize land resources rationally and effect sustainable agricultural development. He also investigated the application of herbicides such as paraquat, which is the active ingredient of Gramoxone 20SL a contact non-systemic herbicide that annihilates weeds upon surface contact while readily binding with the clay particles inherent in the soil, preventing damage to crop plant cells. With Gramoxone's ease in application and the speed with which it rids the land of weeds, Syngenta introduces the Gramoxone Sagip-Lupa Soil Conservation Project to help reduce risks of soil erosion and implement soil conservation regulations in our farmlands.

Research output and documentation support shall be produced as the ultimate product of the study. Recommendations and conclusions shall be highlighted and presented in different forums, audiences and discussions.

Baring the Soil

Drawn from on-site observations and research from seven project locations, the images in the photo exhibit dubbed "Soil Exposed," will highlight significant farming strategies and marked differences between treated and untreated farmlands, focusing on the project's aim to prevent the prodigal waste of our land resources from continuing by investigating soil conservation and soil management techniques.

Soil Exposed celebrates decisive moments in the Gramoxone Sagip-Lupa Project research,



Weed sampling: For the GSL Project, weed sampling was done to identify weeds in and around the project sites.

showing the quietly revolutionary ways with which the research team is adopting different control measures, in light of local conditions, to reduce soil erosion.

The exhibit exposes current farmland conditions in the country while showcasing conservation strategies and difficulties posed by multiple cultivation and manual weeding to farmers. In sharing these on-site observations, the exhibit succeeds in envisioning fields and farmlands flourishing under a sustainable agriculture. Each photo is an evocative excursion into the project, highlighting its aims, and the steps it will take in order to promote soil conservation.

"Soil Exposed" will be highlighted as one of the strategies of the Gramoxone Sagip-Lupa Soil Conservation Project to create awareness and support for soil conservation. From the project launching, the Gramoxone Sagip-Lupa photo exhibit will be showcased in various partner institutions as a means of advocating soil conservation.

Operating on the Green

The project will cover at least two (2) planting seasons, the first season beginning December of last year, 2004, and culminating in May of this year, 2005. The second season will run from May to November of 2005. At the end of November, the project team may opt to extend the study for two more seasons, in the interests of exhausting all other alternatives and applications of the study, and in exploring different crops planted in various areas and topography.

Areas involved were pre-selected to fit the requirement of the study protocol, with each area

having a given target crop for growth and a team to oversee the research. Isabela State University's Dr. Nilo E. Padilla, Research Director and Deputy Executive Director of Cagayan Valley Agriculture and Resources Development Consortium (CVARRD), along with Orlando Lorenzana, Chief DA and Cagayan Valley Integrated Agriculture Research Center (CVIAR) and Vice-chairman of Task Force Mais in Region 2 under the Gloria Macapagal Arroyo (GMA) Mais Program, are the project partners covering the target area of Isabela.

In Tiaong, Quezon, the project will be overseen by Cecille Marie C. Manzanilla, of the Department



Exposed! This coconut tree exhibits the extent of soil erosion in this Batangas farm.

of Agriculture, and Agricultural Center Chief III, DA-Regional Crop Protection Center Regional Field Unit IV in Los Baños along with the University of the Philippines, Los Baños. There is also full support from local government unit represented by Mayor Raul S. Umali, Municipal Agricultural Officer Antonio Dones, Supervising Agriculturist Renato Laraya, and two Agricultural Technologists, Lani Limbo and Fe Valdez.

In Benguet, Dr. Rogelio D. Colting, President Benguet State University, Dr. Jose G. Balaoing, Chairman of Department of Soil Science, College of Agriculture and Dr. Eulogio Cardona, Professor, College of Agriculture, of the Benguet State University will oversee the project sites. Other project sites, as those in Lantapan, Bukidnon, will be

handled by World Agroforestry Centre and Lantapan Landcare Association and the one in Batangas, by the Southern Tagalog Integrated Agricultural Research Center (STIARC). In Nueva Ecija, the Philippine Rice Research Institute will assume the responsibilities of a project partner which will be seen to by the following individuals: Dr. Madonna Casimero, Chief Research Specialist and Edwin Martin, Senior Science Research Specialist. The project sites in Tarlac will be supervised by Philip B. Ibarra, President of Tarlac College of Agriculture, Dr. Jose Rodriguez, Director for Research, Dr. Joselito Beltran, Professor of Weed Science, and Dr. Jeremias Rodriguez, Professor of Crop Science.

On a Common Ground

The academic sector and the research communities shall be an integral partner in the project as they shall provide the platform in the conduct of the study. Most of the manpower requirements, onsite researchers and surveyors shall be from the academic and research communities. The project shall also involve government agencies and local government units. Recognizing the importance of preventing soil erosion brought about by agriculture in rural and agricultural areas, the local government in the area shall be asked for support in terms geographical and political concerns. Relevant government agencies concerned with agriculture, environment and crop protection shall also form part of the team. Farming communities where research sites shall be situated shall also be involved as working farmlands shall be adopted as GSL Project Sites. Their cooperation will be highly needed as these communities shall be the model or pilot communities championing the GSL project.

All throughout, Syngenta Philippines, Inc. stands by a firm commitment to provide resources and technical support for the project. Regular project updates will be delivered through the company's regular television program at ABS CBN Regional, "Lakas Magsasaka." Remaining true to its goal of providing means for a sustainable agriculture worldwide through outstanding crop solutions and innovative breakthroughs, Syngenta's Gramoxone Sagip-Lupa Soil Conservation Project is the pioneering step towards the Philippine agriculture industry's campaign against the growing threat of soil erosion. Let our efforts serve to guard our farmlands against further soil erosion. Let us all protect our agricultural resources. It is time to heal our fields.

Photos of the GSL Project Sagip Lupa photo exhibit were taken by Ms. Mandy Navasero



Soil erosion also occurs in lowland farms due to multiple-cultivation. Gramoxone Bills Sake (reduced/no-tillage) and Bills Lins (inter-row weed control) technologies provide our farmers with better tools towards sustainable agriculture.



LLOYD Cervantes

Cardeno reward money up

By Tina G. Santos

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) yesterday vowed to intensify manhunt operations against Supt. Rafael Cardeno, alleged mastermind in the killing of Young Officers Union spokesperson Baron Cervantes in 2001.

This developed as Cervantes' family, expressing dismay at the failure of authorities to arrest Cardeno and another companion, Santiago "Sonny" Camacho, yesterday formally sought the assistance of the bureau to shed light on the case.

Lloyd Cervantes, younger brother of the victim, said he also asked the NBI to investigate the controversial tape brought out by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson who alleged that the voices belonged to deposed President Joseph Estrada and an unidentified hitman. The young Cervantes said the voice of the hitman was Cardeno's.

"I would recognize that voice anywhere," said Cervantes, who was accompanied by Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC) founding chair Dante Jimenez to the NBI. He stressed that he had taken note of Cardeno's voice when the police official was being interviewed on television a few years ago.

Fear for safety

Cervantes also asked the NBI to provide security for his family. "I fear for my family's safety, but we definitely want justice," he told reporters.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said he had already designated the bureau's Special Action Unit (SAU) to act on the complaint of the Cervantes family, adding that they would also coordinate with other law enforcement agencies. Wycoco said they would also increase the reward money for Cardeno's capture from P500,000 to at least P1 million.

Baron was killed with a single gunshot wound on the head outside the Jubileum Drugstore on Times Street on New Year's Eve in 2001.

After an investigation, suspected gunmen Marine Sgt. Joseph Mostrales, was sentenced to life imprisonment while Jaime Centeno and Erlindo Torres were given the maximum term of 14 years. The three are now detained at the New Bilibid Prisons.

MMDA to put up 9 more commuter bay platforms on Edsa

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has identified nine more locations along Edsa where they would build mid-road commuter bay concrete platforms.

Based on the agency's medium-term plan on loading and unloading bays, mid-lane commuter platforms would be constructed on both southbound and northbound portions, a project that could be completed within two years depending on the availability of funding.

"One of the causes of traffic are bus drivers who would stop anywhere along Edsa either to fetch or unload commuters. At the same time, commuters would just wait anywhere to get their ride," said Ramon Ona, an engineer who heads the central engineering center of the MMDA Traffic Operations Center.

On the southbound stretch of Edsa, the MMDA would be building mid-road loading and unloading curbs near Pinatubo Street in Cubao, in front of Starmall on Shaw Boulevard, near the MRT station and J.P. Rizal Street in

Guadalupe, Makati and before the approach to the Ayala tunnel near Gil Puyat Avenue.

Along Edsa's northbound part meanwhile, the agency is set to build commuter platforms within and towards the Ortigas commercial area, including a bay portion in front of the newly renovated Edsa Central, in front of SM Megamall, and one in front of the Edsa Shrine near Ortigas Avenue.

Mid-road platforms would also be constructed on the eastbound and westbound portions of Congressional Avenue, near its intersection with Edsa. A tandem of

bays would also be constructed on either sides of Edsa at the Balintawak cloverleaf, for passengers bound for either the North Luzon Expressway or Andres Bonifacio towards the western Quezon City area.

Less stops

"The facility would readily bring together passengers bound for a certain area, so that buses would no longer make frequent stops at any point on Edsa," said Ona.

The buses stopping to load or unload would no longer be part

of the mainstream of vehicles, resulting in a free flow of traffic in other lanes," he added.

The mid-road commuter bays, a scheme conceived to go hand-in-hand with the MMDA's pink fences as lane separators on Edsa, would be constructed complete with signs directing commuters and buses to proper waiting areas according to destinations.

The agency had already completed similar projects on Edsa going south near North Avenue, Ayala Avenue and in front of Camp Crame, and southbound in front of Farmer's Plaza.

Cam says son has disappeared

By Jocelyn R. Uy

"JUETENG-GATE" witness Sandra Cam regularly received text messages from her 17-year-old son Paolo informing her of his whereabouts.

However, strange occurrences since have made Cam believe that her son had been kidnapped.

Cam has testified before the Senate that she delivered "payola" or slush funds from the jueteng numbers racket to a son and a brother-in-law of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

On Tuesday, Paolo failed to call or text Cam after he had supposedly come home from classes at the Airlink International Aviation School in Pasay City.

"Usually, he sends his mother a text message informing her where he is," Cam's lawyer Frank Chavez told the INQUIRER yesterday in a phone interview.

The boy does not live with Cam because the latter has to be transferred from one safehouse to another, Chavez explained.

Paolo's classes ended at 6 p.m. the other day. He should have been home by 7 p.m. and should have called his mother, but no calls were made.

Asked where the boy was stay-



CAM: A phone call, but no mention of whereabouts from son.

JOE GALVEZ/CONTRIBUTOR

ing, Chavez only said Paolo was residing an hour away from the aviation school on Airport Road.

But a check showed that Paolo had not been attending classes since these began on June 13.

His instructors at Air Link told reporters yesterday that the college freshman had actually only attended three Physical Education (PE) sessions.

He is enrolled at the aviation school as a college freshman with BS Aircraft Maintenance Technology as his course.

"He was in class on June 23, 24, and 29. He hasn't attended classes since July 7," Paolo's PE instructor, Octaviana Madayag, said.

Chavez said Cam called him up at 10:30 p.m. Tuesday and told him that Paolo was missing.

Chavez said he and Cam already checked with Paolo's friends to no avail.

"His cellphone was turned off. That was so unlikely [of him]," he added.

Between 5:30 and 5:45 yesterday afternoon, Cam was able to

talk to Paolo but she sensed that something was off, Chavez told the INQUIRER.

Citing what Cam had told him, Chavez said Paolo seemed to be speaking out of fear during the phone call.

"He could not talk freely," he said.

Cam also told Chavez that she heard voices in the background as if someone was dictating what the boy should say.

Prior to the phone call, Paolo sent a text message.

The lawyer noted that the message was comprised of big and small letters, which the boy rarely did.

"When he would text his mom, if he uses big letters, he would use it all throughout the message," said Chavez.

The boy would also call Cam "Mama" in his text messages instead of just "Ma." And the message would always end with an "I love you."

Both were absent from the text messages Cam received yesterday, boosting her belief that Paolo had been abducted.

Asked who could be behind any abduction, Chavez said, "All who have been adversely affected by Cam's testimony in the jueteng

hearings are possible suspects."

Defending Macapagal-Arroyo from insinuations that she or the government could have something to do with the reported disappearance of Cam's son, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday denied the Palace had any hand in it.

"There's no such scheme or whatever that would cause Malacañang to do anything sa pagkawala ng anak niya (in the disappearance of her son)," Ermita told reporters.

Ermita then added, "Alam mo yun mga ganyan kasi, mga dirty tricks kung minsan yan. Gagawin ng kabila para sa ganun alam naman nila na i-blame nila dun sa kabila (This could be part of some dirty trick. One side would do it knowing that the other party would be blamed.)"

Meanwhile, National Capital Region Police Office Director Vidal Querol encouraged Cam to formally report the incident to the police.

He pointed out that only when a report had been filed to the police could they take necessary actions.

Cam has two other sons. With reports from Nikko Dizon, Christine O. Avendaño

METROBRIEFS

Manila-Tesda tie-up

MANILA residents can now undergo free training for various livelihood activities after the city government signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda). At the same time, the Kababaihan ng Maynila (KNM), headed by Beng Atienza, wife of Mayor Lito Atienza, also signed a separate MOA with Tesda for livelihood training programs for KNM members. Atienza said graduates of Tesda-assisted programs would be employed in various city establishments requiring their expertise through the Manila Employment Services Office. As provided in the MOA, Tesda would set aside P120,000 to defray the cost of supplies and materials for training programs to be conducted by city hall, and another P100,000 to pay for the training cost of KNM members. Under the MOA, city residents who qualify for livelihood training will

undergo three-month seminars (August to October) in separate batches. The courses include beauty and health care, hotel and restaurant services, cooking and food processing, and artificial plants and flower making.

Tina G. Santos

Health food expo

THE ASIA Health Food and Nutritional Expo, a three-day exhibit on natural foods, organic products, vegetarian and wellness products opens today at Hall 3, Megatrade Hall, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. Among its participants is Natural and Organic Way or NOW, headed by Dr. Zeno "Nonoy" Zuñiga, president, and Juan Rodrigo, vice president for research and product development. NOW markets natural juices made from Philippine fruits and organic household products. Zuñiga, a doctor by profession and a singer by vocation, and Rodrigo, an actor and a BS Chemistry graduate, have been active in environment protection activities.

'Hot meat' seized in Caloocan

By Nancy C. Carvajal

CLOSE to 700 kilos of hot meat could have ended up in different markets in Metro Manila had it not been blocked in Caloocan the other day by the City Veterinary Office (CVO).

"We received a tip from a concerned citizen about the suspected 'double dead' meat that would pass through the city," said Dr. Teodoro Rosales, CVO head.

"Double dead meat" is a local term used to describe meat from animals who had died of diseases that were later slaughtered and sold instead of being buried.

Rosales said the confiscated hot meat were found inside a van parked at the corner of Galaoran Street and 8th Avenue in Caloocan City.

He added that blocks of ice were also found inside the van which

was apparently meant to delay the discoloration of the meat.

No one had claimed ownership of the hot meat with an estimated value of not less than P70,000, Rosales said. This type of meat is usually sold at P60 to P70, compared to the fresh meat sold for P140 a kilo, he added.

"There was no doubt that the meat was spoiled because of its color and foul odor," Rosales said.

The driver of the van denied any knowledge of his cargo and said he also had no idea who rented the van.

Those found guilty of peddling rotten meat could be sentenced to not less than six months and not more than a year.

The CVO chief said they could not ascertain the exact origin and destination of the hot meat.

But he clarified that there was

no need to be alarmed about the spread of foot and mouth disease. "Nothing of that nature had been monitored, but we would like to warn consumers to be more careful of the meat they are going to buy," Rosales said.

Meat buyers should only buy from credible meat dealers and should always look for an inspection stamp on the meat. Consumers can also ask vendors for the inspection certificate if they have doubts on the freshness of the product, he added. "The meat is fresh and is safe for consumption if it's pink or red in color and has no odor," he said.

Rosales added that the local government had set up a hotline number, 288-8811 local 2234, for complaints and information on, businessmen who continue to sell harmful products in the community.

Pope Benedict's edict likely to be ignored

POPE Benedict XVI's call on the Catholic clergy not to meddle in politics will most likely not be heeded.

Why? Because many priests and bishops would not want to give up their power. Most government officials are Catholics, and the clergy thinks their spiritual power over them extends to politics and governance.

The centuries-old power of the Church over the government during the Spanish regime has not been lost on the present crop of clergy. Many priests and bishops still think like the friars of old.

The proposal by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) to set up a "truth commission" to investigate the President is a clear interference in government affairs.

The truth commission, as proposed by the bishops, would investigate President Macapagal-Arroyo's alleged cheating during the last presidential election. Her wire-tapped conversations with a Comelec official supposedly suggested that she rigged the election. Why couldn't Congress or the Supreme Court have made the proposal?

A foreigner would get the impression that the CBCP is the fourth branch of government, next to the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary.

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



The know-it-all bishops were rebuffed by a fellow clergyman, Fr. Joaquin Bernas, an expert in the Constitution, he having taken part in its drafting. Bernas said the setting up of the truth commission would violate the Constitution. Investigations of election fraud, the Jesuit priest said, should be done by the Presidential Electoral Tribunal. Sock it to them, Father!

The latest Pulse Asia survey supposedly showed Metro Manila residents wanted Sen. Panfilo Lacson (36 percent), Vice President Noli de Castro (15 percent), former President Erap (8 percent) as the best person (in that order) to replace embattled President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Susmaryosep! Have Metro Manila residents forgotten about Lacson's reported crimes when he was still in the defunct Philippine Constabulary and was chief of the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission (PACC)? Have they forgotten the confession of Lacson's former henchman, Kit Mateo,

on television? Mateo died of cancer months after making that public confession.

Well, let me remind the public about some of the things the dying man said in that confession: Lacson, as a Constabulary lieutenant, allegedly ordered him to kill a young man who was the boyfriend of his friend's daughter, a coed in a Manila university. The boy was a jobless "kanto" boy and girl's parents naturally disapproved of the relationship.

He allegedly pushed a woman and an eight-year-old child out of a helicopter flying over Manila Bay. The woman and child were relatives of the notorious leader of a kidnap gang. He allegedly ordered a former detainee run over by a truck so he could marry the man's wife. Filipinos really have a short memory.

Even if Harry C. Angping is no longer a congressman, he should conduct himself with dignity like a former legislator. The former representative of Manila's third district allegedly threatened with bodily harm a foreigner, Sven de Souter, who got a contract to supply the Philippine National Police with Austrian-made Glock pistols.

Souter is an official distributor of Glock for Asia. Angping used to be Glock's representative in the country.

INQUIRER Platinum Code



What four-letter noun means unwanted e-mail which is usually of a commercial nature and sent out in bulk?

Find the answer to the question in the highlighted letters above. Highlighted letters may be used more than once. Text in your answer to 29768* for SMART, Globe, and Sun Cellular subscribers and get a chance to win in the weekly or grand draws!

*To join, initially send PDI<space>20<space>answer<space>name/address/age/gender to 29768. Ex.: PDI 20 ANSWER Jonah Imperial/11 Paco St., Makati/22/F. For succeeding answers, the registered subscriber simply sends PDI<space>20<space>answer to 29768. Each entry sent is P2.50. Each participant is allowed a maximum of 3 entries per day.

Prizes at stake:
Weekly Prize: One (1) Winner - P 20,000 in Cash
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Note: The 20% tax on prizes exceeding P10,000 will be shouldered by the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

See print ads and flyers for complete details.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Photo runs from July 17 to December 3, 2005
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4227 Series of 2005

GOLF: Evian Masters; 2:30 p.m. and 9 p.m.; STAR Sports - Check out the replay of Round One then witness Round Two go underway.

CYCLING: Tour de France, Stage 17; 5 p.m.; ESPN - Can Lance Armstrong win his seventh title?

BASKETBALL: NBA Summer League; 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.; Solar Sports



Compiled by L. Manguiat

THURSDAY,
JULY 21, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER



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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

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From Pagudpud to Sorsogon
1114 km
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2 PETROL

Tams seek 3rd win vs Eagles; AdU battles UST

THE FAR Eastern U Tamaraws believe there should be little room for errors when they gun for a share of the lead against the Ateneo Eagles in the UAAP basketball tournament today at the Araneta Coliseum.

"We have to improve on our defense against Ateneo," said new FEU mentor Bert Flores. "They have the coaching experience of Norman Black. They're a very strong team, they were just surprised (by La Salle) in their first game."

FEU will try to join idle University of the Philippines on top at 3-0 in the 4 p.m. main game, while the Adamson Falcons will shoot for their second win against the University of Santo Tomas Tigers earlier at 2 p.m.

Meanwhile, the UAAP technical committee dismissed yesterday the La Salle Archers' protest against officiating lapses in their 57-56 loss to the University of the East Warriors.

"The protest was denied because the committee deemed it was a judgment call by the referees," said technical committee chair Ricky Palou, referring to the alleged non-calls on goal tending violations. "Protests are upheld if it involves technical matters."

Mark Isip is expected to lead the Tamaraws after averaging 21.5 points and 9.5 rebounds in FEU's first two games.

Black knows it will be another tough task for the Eagles, who have since recovered with a 79-72 win over the Tigers last Saturday.

"FEU is a very talented team, probably the most experienced team," said Black, noting that his Eagles struggled with their confidence after a surprisingly lopsided 78-60 loss against rival La Salle Archers in the opener.

"Arwind Santos is the (2004) MVP so they have the leadership to go along with their talent," added Black. "We have to play our A-game against FEU, there's no question about that."

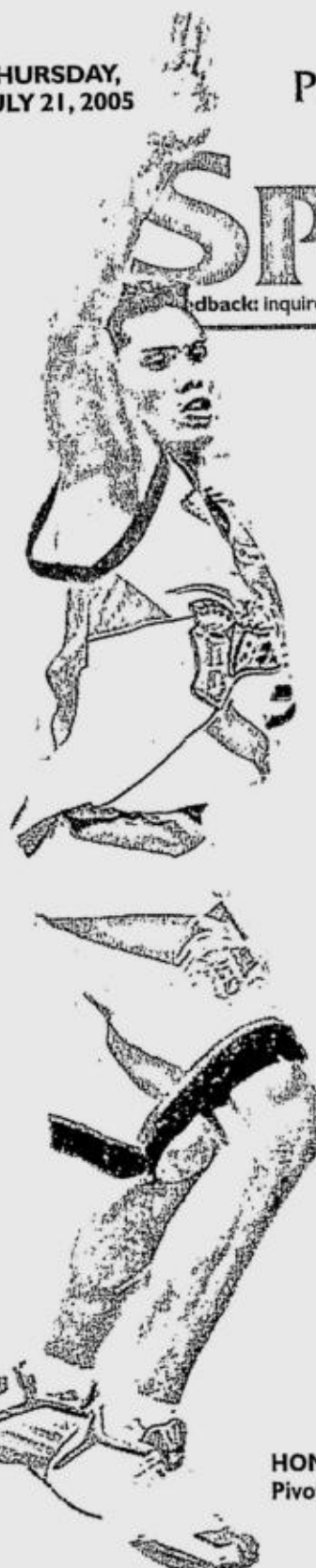
Hoping to lead the Eagles is playmaker LA Tenorio, who posted a triple-double with 15 points, 11 rebounds, 12 assists against the Tigers.

The Tamaraws cruised to their second straight win versus the Falcons, 68-51.

The Falcons, though, are hoping to boost their stock with new coach Mel Alas.

"It's our defense that we've been practicing for a long time," said Alas, who's leaning on hefty center Ken Bono.

With no big men to turn to, the Tigers have been relying on a strong backcourt performance led by veterans Warren de Guzman and Danny Pribhdas. *Jasmine W. Payo*



HONTIVEROS: Pivotal jumper

RP five stuns Jam in Global Hoops

THE PHILIPPINE team overcame a 16-point deficit to shock the previously unbeaten Long Beach Jam, 93-92, in a cliffhanger at the Global Hoops Summit in the Cox Pavilion on the University of Nevada at Las Vegas campus Tuesday afternoon (yesterday morning in Manila).

Dondon Hontiveros hit a 15-foot jumper to give the Philippines only its third taste of the lead with 50.2 seconds to go. Then Jay-Jay Helterbrand stole off 6-foot-7 Alex Comaco to preserve the advantage.

The Jam had a chance to pull it out, but Kamron Sufi's desperate jumper was off the mark at the buzzer.

It was a stirring performance by the Filipinos, who refused to give up even as leading scorer Ren-Ren Ritualo strained his left calf muscle and was sidelined early in the first period.

Tony de la Cruz fired 14 of his 22 points in the second period as the Philippines prevented the Jam from ballooning a 16-point cushion, 31-15. Then James Yap took over, firing 13 of his 16 points in the second half.

Romel Adducul stood his ground against the Jam giants, scoring 11 points and grabbing seven rebounds.

NBA veteran Fred Vinson, who played for Carol-Ann's in the Philippine Basketball League a few years ago, said he ran out of steam in the end. He finished with 19 points.

Former Talk 'N Text import Damien Cantrell fired 18 points and grabbed 13 rebounds, but couldn't save the Jam which entered the game with a 3-0 slate after beating Nigeria by 13, Aoshen of China by 39 and SFX Sports by four.

The Jam won the American Basketball Association title with Dennis Rodman two seasons back and is the only club entered in the Summit that plays as a franchise in a regular league.

"The Philippines played hard," said Long Beach coach Corey Gaines, a former NBA guard from UCLA. "They deserved to win. They competed out there. We were out to win but we didn't get the job done. I told my guys not to take them lightly, not to give them open threes. I told them to dump the ball inside and power but they didn't listen."

Cantrell, a former Talk 'N Text import, said he warned his teammates to take the Philippines seriously before the game. "You can't underestimate the Filipinos because they fight to the last possession," he said.

"They play smart. From when I played in the PBA, I noticed there's much better

ball movement, execution and motion in the offense now."

Coach Chot Reyes said the big win will forever be a milestone in his career.

"It's the first time for me to beat a US team," said Reyes. "This has to be very memorable. But more than a personal triumph, this will lead to bigger victories, particularly in Asia. This will go a long way in boosting our confidence that we can compete against bigger, more athletic players."

Reyes said Ritualo's sidelining was a "downer" but it challenged his teammates to take over, particularly Yap and Hontiveros.

"On defense, our focus was not to give Vinson open looks from outside and to keep Cantrell off the glass because he's such a strong offensive rebounder," said Reyes. "We doubled inside and took away their inside game. We noticed their post players aren't used to getting doubled. We also checked their pick-and-rolls."

The scores:

RP 93—De la Cruz 22, Yap 16, Hontiveros 13, Helterbrand 12, Adducul 11, Allado 6, Williams 4, Cortez 4, Thoss 3, Marnani 2, Ritualo 0, Raymundo 0, Alvarez 0.

LONG BEACH 92—Wright 19, Vinson 19, Cantrell 18, Comaco 17, Vanderline 9, Ormly 4, Hughes 4, Daglas 2, Sufi 0.

Halftime: 38-48.

Badminton, volleyball bets to embark on foreign stints

FOREIGN stints have also been lined up for badminton and volleyball players as part of their buildup for the coming Southeast Asian Games.

Bannered by 2003 SEAG bronze winners Kenie and Kennievic Asuncion, the badminton team will compete in the Chinese Taipei satellite tournament set Aug. 31 to Sept. 4.

National team coach Martin Araneta said the team, revamped three months ago, has been training regularly and even played dual matches with their counterparts from Indonesia and Malaysia.

But the Taipei stint, he said, is going to be critical in gauging the team's status so far.

The women's volleyball team will compete in the World Championship qualifying tournament in Thailand starting Aug. 1.

The Philippines picked up a bronze during the

Vietnam SEAG two years ago, but is expected to fight for the gold in the Nov. 27-Dec. 5 Games set in Metro Manila and four other provincial venues.

Volleyball official Dante Reyes said that while Thailand is the perennial champion, the Filipino belles have a shot at the gold this time.

"They are just well traveled," said Reyes of the Thais, who represented the region during the World FIVB women's volleyball grand prix held here. "But height-wise and talent-wise, we are not far behind."

The Asuncions recently provided a glimpse of their crack forms by dragging the world's No. 1 mixed doubles pair of Nathan Robertson and Gail Emms of England to a three-setter during the MVP Cup won by Team Asia over Team Europe.

Other Filipino athletes are now in China training for the SEA Games as part of the China-RP sports partnership. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

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Ramos quits as FedEx coach

By June Navarro

CONFLICTING philosophies on the court led to the early end of the partnership of Bong Ramos and the FedEx Express.

Ramos resigned yesterday as head coach of the Express less than a month before the Philippine Basketball Association rookie draft where the Bert Lina-owned ballclub is expected to grab the top pick.

"I have my own coaching style but I guess it won't go well with the team's philosophy for the coming season so I decided to resign," Ramos told the INQUIRER after cutting short a two-year pact with the Express.

The FedEx management has a standing policy that all its players see action in every game.

As chief tactician of FedEx for six months, Ramos steered the Express to a fifth-place finish, a vast improvement for a team struggling to just get into the quarterfinals since joining the league in 2002.

Ramos said he called it quits because it won't do the Express any



WASHINGTON: Likely to be FedEx's top draft pick

good if he continues to call the shots under a framework different from his own.

"The team management and I parted ways with no hard feelings," said Ramos, who personally submitted his letter of resignation to FedEx-Air21

president/team manager Lito Alvarez. "I told them that it was I who have a problem and not them."

The Express own the top pick and two more rookie choices for the first round of the draft slated Aug. 14 at the Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall in Cainta, Rizal.

Among the prime choices for the No. 1 pick are Welcoat's Anthony Washington and Mac Cardona of De La Salle University.

"I also thought that this is the right time to step down to give management enough time to rebuild its coaching staff before the draft," said Ramos.

"It will be unfair for the team and whoever takes over if I make decisions in the draft only to resign afterwards. This will give management a fresh start and apply its policies on a long-term basis," he added.

Ramos said he would rest and spend a week in Jakarta, Indonesia, where he coached the country's national team for three years.

"I'll start looking for a new coaching job when I come back," said Ramos.

Bacolod SEAG hosting hits snag

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BACOLOD'S hosting of the 2005 Southeast Asian Games has hit a snag after the city government delayed the release of P10 million, which is part of the city's budget for refurbishing the venues for five events.

Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella yesterday said he's hoping the delay won't last long as there's only four months left before the SEAG is held in Metro Manila, Bacolod, Cebu City and Subic.

Puentevella, who is also vice president

of the Philippine Olympic Committee and one of the top organizers of the biennial event, nevertheless said renovation work has started at the Paglaum Sports Complex, which will host some of the football games.

He had estimated the cost of repairs on the government-owned facilities to reach P100 million. Bacolod will host men's football, indoor and beach volleyball, weightlifting and boxing.

Men's football will also be played at the Panaad Sports Complex, while boxing will be held at the La Salle gym.

Beach volleyball will be staged at the Bacolod Reclamation Center, while indoor volleyball is set at the La Salle and Bacolod Arts Center. Weightlifting will be held at the Bacolod Convention Center.

The latest snag came on the heels of taekwondo's transfer from the Cebu City Coliseum to the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City following a row between the Cebu and taekwondo officials on the funding for the repair of the venue.

Reports said Cebu officials refused to release funds for the repair of the coliseum because it is privately owned.

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SPORTS

Spring Oil-Laguna dribblers repulse Mantawi

MANDAUE CITY—Spring Cooking Oil-backed Laguna thwarted a blistering rally by Hapee/Dewfoam-supported Mantawi to prevail, 90-81, Tuesday night in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship at the Sports/Cultural Center here.

Veterans Robin Mendoza and Mar Reyes scored four points after Mantawi's Ronald Capati had missed four straight free throws to douse cold water on the Sparkling Nights' fierce comeback from a 24-point deficit.

A 15-0 run fueled by Capati, Ardy Larong and Mark Moreno brought Mantawi within four, 78-82, at the 4:51 mark, before Mendoza and Reyes made it 86-78.

It was the fourth win in seven games for the Cooking Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Taco" Padilla and Gov. Teresita "Ningning" Lazaro in the tourney supported by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Accel, Molten, Nature's Spring, Far Eastern Insurance, Skygo Motorcycles,

Sirlitz, Hapee Toothpaste, Dewfoam, KSK Food Products (Boy Bawang), Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza-Cebu.

Spring fell to defending champion Tribu Sugbu Sunday to split its two-game Visayan trip.

The loss was the third in eight games for Mantawi, which is also supported by Mayor Thadeo "Teddy" Ouano.

PBA veterans Gilbert Demape and Noli Locsin failed to suit up for Mantawi. Demape failed to get a clearance from

Sta. Lucia Realty, while Locsin was still grieving over his father's death.

Murphy Limbo scattered 11 points to give Mantawi a 24-22 lead at the end of the first quarter.

But the Cooking Oil Masters banked on Val Domingo, Sonny Manucat and Kemuel Proceso to drop a 19-8 bomb and rip the game apart.

"The veterans took over when Mantawi was making a run," said Laguna coach Vic Sanchez. "That spelled the difference."

Action continues today with Valencia and Iligan parting ways as they clash at 6 p.m. at MSU gym in Iligan City.

The scores:

LAGUNA 90—Manucat 23, Proceso 14, Domingo 11, Mallari 11, Manuel 8, Kalawa 7, Latoreno 6, Mendoza 4, Villamin 2, Corbin 2, Reyes 2, Vivero 0, Alejar 0, Nuqui 0.

MANTAWI 81—Limbo 19, Larong 18, Capati 16, Alminario 11, Moreno 4, Huelar 4, Carretas 4, Gloria 3, Franco 2, Antiporda 0, Sereno 0, Ignacio 0, Banting 0.

Quarters: 22-24, 51-39, 77-56, 90-81.

PCU, Letran stay unbeaten

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE PHILIPPINE Christian U Dolphins took some time to get going before the defending champions coasted to a 63-49 triumph over the St. Benilde Blazers in the NCAA basketball tournament yesterday at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Dynamic forward Gabby Espinas sparked the Dolphins' sixth straight victory with a game-high 18 points on top of 17 rebounds and two blocks.

The Dolphins closed the third period with an explosive 22-2 rally after trailing by as many as 11 points in the second quarter.

"We were lazy in the first half," said coach Junel Baculi. "We just wanted the ball to land in our hands without working for it. We had to develop a killer instinct defensively. It wasn't there in the first half, but we showed it in the second half."

The Dolphins shared the lead with the Letran Knights, who slipped past the Mapua Cardinals, 69-67, in the day's second game.

Boyet Bautista nailed a running shot in the last 6.1 seconds to bail out the Knights and the Cardinals blew their last offensive with a bad inbound pass.

"He wasn't following my instructions earlier but in the final 23 seconds, I still wanted him to take the shot," said Knights coach Louie Alas of Bautista.

Jonathan Aldave keyed the Knights' third-quarter comeback to finish with 14 points.

The Cardinals slipped to third with a 4-2 record, while the Blazers joined the San Sebastian Stags at 3-3.

The Knights withstood the hot performance of Mapua forward Joferson Gonzales, who shot a season-high 37 points, including the three-pointer

that tied the count at 67-67.

After an unimpressive first half, the Dolphins needed only one quarter to turn things around with Espinas sparking a furious comeback in the third period from 31-40.

Aldave powered a 10-0 run to push the Knights ahead, 48-47, after trailing at 38-47.

The Knights held on to a 65-59 edge, but a Raymond Tiongo triple followed by Kelvin Dela Peña's undergoal stab trimmed the deficit to a point, 65-64.

Aaron Aban, who contributed 10 points, lifted the Knights to 67-64, before Gonzales responded with a three-pointer to tie the contest, 67-67, with 49.6 seconds remaining.

The scores:

First game
PCU 63—Espinas 18, Retaga 16, Belga 10, Castro 9, Solis 4, Sanz 3, Santos 3, Cecilia 0, Amparado 0, Garrido 0.

BENILDE 49—Sagad 12, Manding 12, Orbeta 9, Urta 6, Morial 6, Cabatu 4, Good 0, Layug 0, Porras 0, Robles 0.

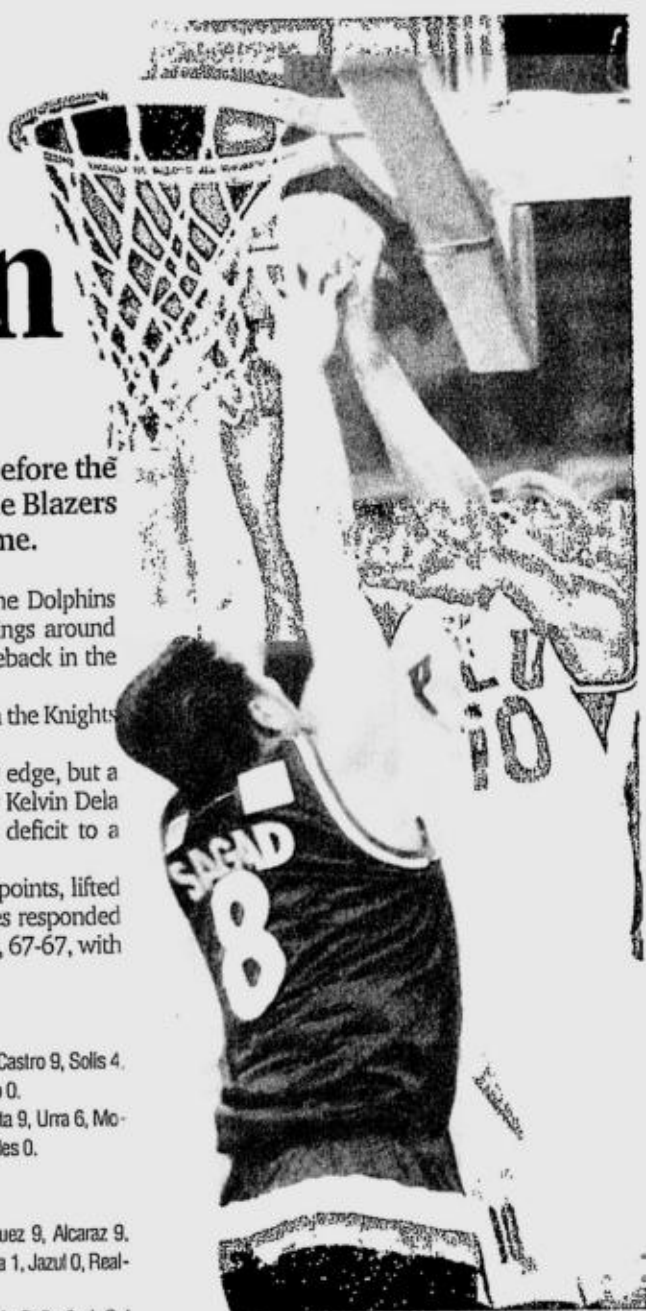
Quarters: 14-18, 23-32, 52-42, 63-49.

Second game

LETRAN 69—Aldave 14, Aban 10, Rodriguez 9, Alcaraz 9, Andaya 9, Bautista 8, Quinday 7, Anabao 2, Pihera 1, Jazul 0, Realista 0, Melegrio 0, Balnag 0.

MAPUA 67—Gonzales 37, Tiongo 10, Dela Peña 6, J. Del Rosario 6, Pascual 5, Veranga 3, A. Del Rosario 0, Sumalinog 0, Co O. Salud 0, Malgapo 0, Migraso 0.

Quarters: 20-14, 28-36, 52-49, 69-67.



PCU's Gabriel Espinas (10) disputes the rebound with St. Benilde's Ernie Jay Sagad in their NCAA game yesterday.

RYAN LIM

Riviera rips Manila Golf in Fed League

RIVIERA exacted vengeance on Manila Golf Club with a rousing 3.5-.5 result to muddle up the race for the two slots in the Green division even as Forest Hills moved closer to a sure spot in the Blue group in the Johnnie Walker-Federation Golf League matches in various venues recently.

With all matches reaching the final hole, the Riverians got three wins and a draw to earn a bonus point and tie their victims for second place at 6 points. Riviera thus continued its charge from

the bottom of the pack in the last three games.

The combination of Pepot Inigo-Ben Lician took the alternate shot match, 1 up, while Bobby Inigo-Miggs Garcia (high-low) and Bobby Celestino-Danny Pizarro (aggregate) prevailed via 2 up for the win. Riviera got the extra point when Eric Gozo-Dennis Reyes halved the scramble match.

Larry Patnongon and Emeng Buenaventura delivered the clinching win for Forest Hills in its 3-1 conquest of Mimosa which hosted the match.

Gary Uy-Perdie Atendido (foursomes) and

Raffy Garcia-Bobby Chico (aggregate) won their respective games to boost Forest Hills' total to 10, three clear of Orchard which drew a bye.

In another Blue division match, Edmund Yee-Koji Yasuma took the aggregate game on the last hole to salvage a 2-2 draw for visiting Eastridge with Canlubang. Cangolf remains third at 5 points, a point ahead of Eastridge.

In the tough Gold group, Manila Southwoods remained on top at 10 points despite a 2-2 draw with Alabang.

Sacred Heart, Springdale golfers start hot

CEBU—Sacred Heart School-Jesuit and Springdale School grabbed the lead in their respective divisions at the start of the Samsung Interscholastic golf championships yesterday at the Cebu Country Club here.

Charles Uy exploded for 47 points, Franz Olea tallied 40 and Franz Ian Dy added 37 as Sacred Heart School stormed to a 42-point advantage over Springdale in the boys high school division.

Shotaro Suda did not count for Sacred Heart which posted a 124 total for the day, far ahead of Springdale which was led by Francis Jereza (33)

and Adriel Laurenz Tan (28). Another Sacred Heart team was running third at 52 points.

Springdale, however, showed the way in the boys division with Michael Manglapus, Lorenzo Almaro, Lyon Valenzuela, Martin Mendoza and Antonio Chiongbian pooling 103 points.

Centre of International Education, represented by Vijay Vasandi III, Valentin Mendoza, Raphael Wong and Jan Mihail Ybanez, totaled 91 points and started out 12 points behind Springdale.

Competition was tight in the individual category of the tourney also supported by Tokyo Tokyo,

KZG, Coppertone Sport, Srixon, Philippine Airlines as the official carrier, Sunbolt, Rudy Project, C-Lium Fiber and Sports Plus. Media partners are Wave 89.1, Jam 88.3, 89.9, 99.5 RT, 103.5 K-Lite and Killer Bee.

Mark Anthony Dy of University of San Carlos and Blake Nelson Go were tied for the lead in college play with 46 points, a point up on Efren Gica.

Edsel Tan fired 50 points to pace Charles Uy and Chepe Dulay in the high school division, Vijay Vasandi scored 41 points to lead Lorenzo Almaro and Raphael Wong by two in grade school boys.

Morales cops bike, car racing crowns

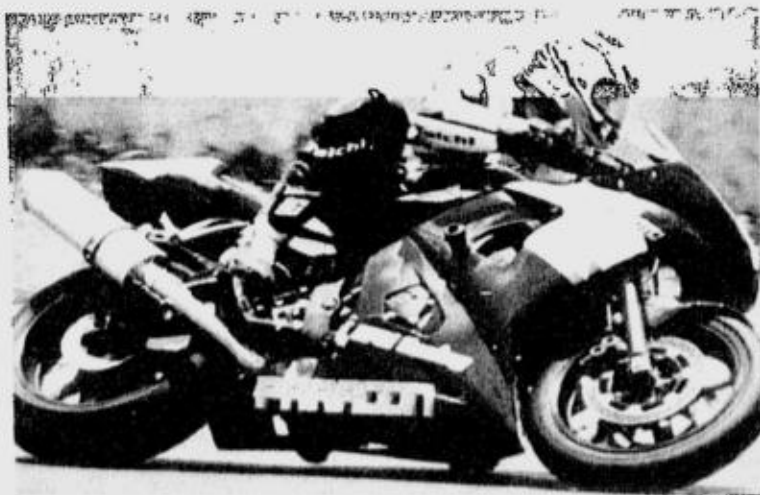
ROSARIO, Batangas—Renan Morales showed the elite field what he's capable of—both on four and two wheels—and posted swashbuckling victories in the National Junior Touring Car Championships and the Road Racing Championships at the Batangas Racing Circuit here.

Morales won the first staging of the Road Racing Championships over Jay Cortez and Miguel Ripoll with a time of 25:59.575.

Rounding out the Top 7 in the RRC are Julian Diego (4th), Miguel Cervantez (5th), Arvin Gallares (6th) and Roy Flores (7th).

"This is the first time that I'm competing in a motorbike and the feeling is exhilarating," said Morales. "I like it, as a matter of fact, of all the races this is perhaps the greatest high that I felt in a long time."

Morales is leading the NJTC and is one of the Philippines' stalwarts in the Asian Formula Three Grand Prix.



VETERAN car driver Renan Morales enters and wins his first motorbike race in the Road Racing Championships at the BRC.

SEAG gab tackles broadcast rights today

THE BROADCAST arrangement for the 23rd Manila Southeast Asian Games will be presented to representatives from 10 SEAG countries during a meeting today at the Heritage Hotel along Roxas Boulevard.

Philippine SEAG Organizing Committee chair-Roberto Pagdanganan and concurrent Philsoc vice chair and Philippine Olympic Committee

president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco will welcome the visiting delegates.

The Philsoc hopes to raise at least P30 million in broadcast rights for the SEAG set Nov. 27-Dec. 5 in Metro Manila and four other provincial venues.

People's Television Network Inc./NBN 4 will be the main carrier of the Games, with its GM, Jose Isabelo, to preside over the meeting.

Each of the 10 member nations outside of the Philippines will be charged P3 million for the right to bring the Games to their countrymen. CNN is also interested in broadcasting the Games.

The Philsoc needs P900 million to host the Games, but has only P300 million so far. Another P300 million will come from President Macapagal-Arroyo's Social Fund.

Musong R. Castillo

Sultan targets Hidaka's OPBF crown

REIGNING Philippine welter champ Dondon Sultan tries to wrest the Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation welter title from Kazuhiko Hidaka of Japan in a 12-round tiff at the Korakuen Hall in Tokyo, Japan, today. During yesterday's official weigh-in, both came in below the 147-lb limit, with Sultan coming in at 145.9 lb and the taller Hidaka tipping the scales at 146.5 lb. "I'm not bothered at all by his height advantage," said Sultan. "I came here to win the title." Ex-WBC king Malcolm Tuñacao and reigning OPBF minimumweight titlist Rodel Mayol, accompanied by manager Yasuo Matsuoka and trainer Brix Flores, said they will be at ringside for Sultan's fight.

Salven Lagumbay

Inaugural Drag Race tomorrow

MORE than 60 drivers are expected to compete for top honors as the Batangas Racing Circuit stages the Inaugural Drag Race tomorrow at the country's first permanent Drag Strip in Barangay Maligaya, Rosario, Batangas.

Some 50 drivers of various drag racing groups tested the said Drag Strip last Saturday and gave positive response on the track features. "All of them were excited over the high traction of the track that gives a fast reaction time during takeoff," said BRC manager Sherwin Mojica. "They were so enthusiastic about the speed and expects faster times than the previous street tracks they've tried." Among those who test-driven the Drag Strip were Sonny de Torres and Bong Hilario aboard a Honda Civic, Jak Ramos on a Mitsubishi Mirage and Danny Yema aboard a prototype jeep. For details, call the Batangas Racing Circuit at (632) 817-2241 or fax 815-1241 or Rodin Rivera (0927-321-9363 or rivera_rodin@yahoo.com), Sherwin Mojica (0915-460-6653 or sherwinmojica@yahoo.com) or Nelson Gayola (0917-6920767 or nelson_gayola@kiltonmotor.com).

Maldonado rules FATS tourney

RIZAL Technological University (RTU) coed Jarg Maldonado made it back to back in the monthly FATS bar and billiards 9-ball tournament when she prevailed over Rea Gallardo in the July finals in the ladies' division. Lucky Leigh played in her maiden tournament and finished third. Ogie Lim took the top prize in the men's division with Dean Diokno and Chris Galo finishing second and third, respectively. The winners received their prizes of bicycles, imported cue sticks and gift certificates from FATS general manager Len Ngan after the tournament.

Badminton shown on IBC tomorrow

HIGHLIGHTS of the JVC Open Badminton Championships will be telecast on IBC 13 beginning tomorrow at 8 p.m. with the championship matches in two categories on tap for the first part of the three-episode series. They include the mixed doubles in the juniors division and the men's singles in the elite class. Episode 2 will be shown on Saturday starting at 7 p.m. featuring the boys' singles finals (juniors), and the men's singles and men's doubles finals in the elite masters.

Academia, Gonzales rule kartfest

ROMAN Carlo Academia, the 2004 TRS Pika Kids champion, and rookie Paolo Gonzales, 10, took home the Experts and Novice titles, respectively, during the final leg of the 2005 Champions of the Future kids karting series last Sunday at Boomland Kart Trak. With two second places and a win, the 11-year-old Academia took the 2005 Champions of the Future Experts title with a total of 118 points. Finishing second was Roby Benito. Demalsip took third with 93. Gonzales got the Novice Championships with 147, while Domingo ended the season in second place with 100 points. Renz Pascoquin landed third overall with 80. The series, organized by the Tuason Racing School, is sponsored by Bingo Bonanza, Smart Kid, Petron Ultrun, Alaska, Loc-tile, Oakley, Manila Speedzone, Brothers Burger, Philippine International Karting Association (Pika), Asian Formula Three Corp. (AF3) and Directory Philippines Corp.



CORPORATE CUP: The 2005 Sportshouse Corporate and Celebrity Cup Invitational Badminton tournament started Monday at the Club 650 in Libis, Quezon City. Making the ceremonial serve are from left, Sportshouse president Mars Chua, Team Powerplay head Weena Lim and Dunlop Slazenger International Inc. general manager Cecille Reyes.

Tiger's British Open victory vindicates swing coach

ST. ANDREWS, Scotland—Hank Haney never asked to be in the spotlight. This was one time he didn't mind it.

Tiger Woods took the claret jug through a side door to begin a long list of obligations as the British Open champion. Haney, who had quietly watched his pupil from behind the ropes at St. Andrews, tried to leave the interview area unnoticed when he suddenly found himself surrounded by reporters.

Only this time, the Dallas-based swing coach didn't feel as though he was being grilled on the witness stand.

The questions shifted from "What on

earth have you done?" to "How did you do it?" And now that Woods has won two of the first three majors, "How close is he to fully grasping the swing changes?"

"He's not going to ever be satisfied with getting there," Haney said. "He's not looking for 'getting there.' He's looking for getting better. That's what he looks for every day."

Whatever it is, Woods appears to have found it.

The guy who won 10 majors without a victory—matching the longest drought of his career—again seems to own them. He won the Masters by hitting his two best

shots of the day on the first hole of a sudden-death playoff. He combined his best ball-striding with his worst putting at the US Open and finished second.

Then, he became the first start-to-finish winner at the British Open in 32 years, opening with a 66 and leading over the final 63 holes with utter control over the Old Course.

Asked on the BBC if he had a message for those who questioned why he would change a swing that made him No. 1 in the world by a mile, Woods said it was nothing he could repeat on air, even in Britain.

Moments later, he dropped a not-so-subtle hint.

"First, second and first in the last three majors," Woods said. "That's why."

If it was validation for Woods, it must have felt like vindication for Haney.

Every major that went by with someone else holding the trophy, every tee shot by Woods that sailed deep into the trees brought with it an explanation that invariably included Haney's name. One player joked that with the US PGA Tour headed into negotiations for a new television deal—and contracts are helped when

Woods is playing his best—he might sue Haney for loss of wages.

Inside Woods' camp, the swing changes were so private that Woods refused to discuss what he was working on, and he more than once asked his caddy to place the golf bag in front of television cameras that tried to capture the swing. Haney went so far as to tell Woods to keep their relationship quiet as long as he could.

Some would argue that it's stealing money to be the swing coach of the No. 1 player in golf.

Haney would tell you otherwise. **AP**

2 share jet ski honors

SUBIC—World Jetski runner-up Paul del Rosario and BJ Ang of Network Jetsports ruled their respective classes yesterday in the 2005 Petron Blaze-JSAP Jet Ski Invitational Race at the Waterfront Beach of the Subic Bay Free Zone here.

Del Rosario, also the Asian runner-up and a two-time national champion, defeated 1997 champion John Dee to capture the Expert Runabout 1200 class.

Del Rosario also topped the Open Ski Stand-up title and the Open Sport class in this event sponsored by Petron Blaze, Network Jetsports, Asia Brewery Inc., Premiere Ready Mix and Dee Concrete, Lipovitan D, Gerry's Grill-Subic, Cardam's Shoes and Lakeshore.

Ang, a veteran of King's Cup in Thailand, stole the limelight from Excel Torres in the final race to clinch the Expert Runabout 800 plum of the competition also supported by KingGerald's RPM, Als Marine, De Beer Auto Refinishes, Aresi Bar and Grill, Courtyard Inn, Atty. Cesar B. Reyes and Co., Dream 1 Bar and Restaurant, Atoy Body Kits and Xenon Bulbs.

Ruling the other classes were Myk Mangio, Asian Formula 3 driver Roland Hermoso, Jam Mangio, Jeremy Chua and another Guam international rider Alex del Mundo.

Those intending to compete in the national series can call 4133109 or log on at www.networkjetsports.com.

Lance still unscathed after final testy climb

PAU, France—Lance Armstrong simplified his game plan after scaling the last tough mountain of his Tour de France career.

"The big, big days and the big difficulties are done," Armstrong said after Tuesday's 16th stage. "Now we have to stay safe, stay conservative and look to the final time trial and try and close it out."

Completing the last of three days in the Pyrenees left just a mostly flat stage, two medium mountain stages and the time trial for Armstrong to negotiate before what he hopes is a final victorious pedal up Paris' Champs-Élysées.

Spaniard Oscar Pereiro won the stage, with Armstrong finishing in a group that included Ivan Basso, T-Mobile leader Jan Ullrich and other top riders—all 3 minutes, 24 seconds behind Pereiro.

Armstrong's lead over Basso, looking to improve on his third-place finish last year, remains at 2:46. Mickael Rasmussen of Denmark is third, 3:09 behind the six-time champion. Ullrich is fourth overall and trails Armstrong by 5:58.

Armstrong was so untroubled during Tuesday's stage, he felt as if he was freewheeling.

"It was an amazing day. Today there was no chain on the bike," he said. "Maybe today was one of my best days. I don't know why, I don't have a real explanation, but I felt totally confident. I felt the team was very strong. It was a great day for us."

Armstrong's main rivals, sensing that their chances of catching the American are slipping away, tried testing him again on two rigorous climbs.

But he brushed off the challenges, easily matching their uphill accelerations to defend his comfortable lead. So, the challengers concentrat-



LANCE Armstrong (in yellow) plays it safe and sticks to his closest rivals: Michael Rasmussen (left), Jan Ullrich (second from right) and Ivan Basso during the tough stage. Basso is running second to Armstrong in the overall race. Rasmussen is third overall while Ullrich is fourth.

ed on Rasmussen—who has a nearly three-minute lead over Ullrich and could prevent the German from finishing on the podium for only the second time in his career. Ullrich, the 1997 Tour champion, was fourth last year and has placed second five times—to three to Armstrong.

"T-Mobile was apparently trying to take back time from Rasmussen," Armstrong said after the 180.5-kilometer (112.2-mile) trek from Mourenx to Pau. "So they were doing

everything they could."

Relieved to be done with France's tortuous Alps and Pyrenees for good, the 33-year-old Armstrong has a clearer idea of what's needed to seal the race.

"It's always nice to get through the mountains," he said. "If you avoid problems, if you avoid accidents. [If you] don't get some freaky illness, a sort of catastrophe, the odds are good."

Naga leg of Milo footrace slated

MORE than 4,000 runners have signed up for the Naga City leg of the 29th National Milo Marathon elimination run Sunday, where participants battle for a share of over P144,000 in prizes and a slot in the national finals in Manila.

Bicolanos are eagerly awaiting a battle royale in the men's division among Alvin Canada, Neri Barcelo and Ernie Payong even as several private and public institutions vie for the different school competitions that will serve as a side event.

Winners in the 21K elimination run, 5K fun run, 3K kiddie run, biggest school delegation, inter school running competition and the cheer dance competition will receive cash prizes, trophies and medals.

Naga City Mayor Jesse M. Robredo fires the starting gun at 6 p.m. Sunday, July 2005 from Naga City's Quezon Plaza, where thousands of Bicolanos will be on hand to watch and cheer as this longest running nationwide event unfolds.

Final TC race set

OUTSTANDING three-year-olds fight it out for track supremacy in the P1.67 million Horseman's Cup, the third leg of the Triple Crown, July 24 at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite.

Arch rivals Speed Advantage and Real Spicy are set to match strides, with the newly favored Thy-willbedone, winner of the JV Ong-ping Cup (2nd leg of the Triple Crown) in the event event, held in honor of industrialist-horseman Norberto Quisumbing Sr.

Also competing are D As In Dixie, In Command, Ocean Deep, War Alert and Wind Runner.

The Philippine Racing Commission-sponsored race carries a guaranteed purse of P1 million going to the winner, while the next three placers would also be getting guaranteed prizes of P376,500, P209,250 and P84,000, respectively.

The race also serves as the main event of Manila Jockey Club's action-packed 13-race card.

Phelps' latest goal: Expanding his repertoire

COLLEGE PARK, Maryland—Michael Phelps is taking some time off from his relentless pursuit of first-place finishes, world records and Olympic medals.

After enjoying unprecedented success in the swimming pool last summer, Phelps has embarked on a new challenge: Expanding his repertoire to include events that will test his versatility, conditioning and resolve.

At the world championships in Montreal, Phelps will compete in eight events, just as he did

in the Athens Olympics. But his workload won't be the same. He has replaced two of his world-record events, the 200-meter butterfly and 400 individual medley, with the 100 and 400 freestyle.

"I think it will make things interesting, keep me on my toes," Phelps said.

Phelps set five individual world records at the 2003 world championships before capturing a record eight medals (six gold) at the 2004 Olympics. It's too early to start worrying about the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, so for now Phelps is go-

ing to have a little fun in the pool, even if it means finishing behind Australian Grant Hackett in the 400-meter freestyle.

"It's really easy for Michael to get bored with the 400 IM—done that, been there," US coach Dave Salo said. "Michael understands his legacy. I think he wants to go down in history as probably the greatest swimmer we've ever had in this country, if not the world. So he's willing to take on the top guys, and if he gets a bronze medal once in a while, he's OK with that."



PHELPS

Detroit Pistons 'fire' coach Brown, eye Saunders

DETROIT—Larry Brown was released as coach by the Detroit Pistons on Tuesday.

Brown and the Pistons reached a settlement on the final three years of his contract, Pistons spokesperson Matt Dobek said. He is free to coach another team next season, said Dobek, who declined to provide further details.

Asked if the team had fired Brown, Dobek replied: "Say what you want."

The team didn't want the Hall of Fame coach back and had offered a payoff, Brown's agent, Joe Glass, said on Tuesday.

"I take umbrage with the Pistons, or sources, saying it's a buyout," Glass said before the announcement. "A buyout encom-

passes a mutual agreement, and that's not what is happening. Larry Brown is saying, 'I want to coach the Pistons,' and they want to pay him off for whatever reason."

The Pistons said on Monday they were negotiating a buyout, but previously they had said they would welcome Brown back if he was willing to return.

After the announcement, messages seeking comment were left with Brown, and Glass.

In a statement, team president of basketball operations Joe Dumars said "the search for a new Pistons' head coach has already begun." Brown is expected to be replaced by former Minnesota Timberwolves coach Flip Saunders.

Who can stop Tiger Woods?

IT'S all very clear now that it is no longer a question of whether Tiger Woods will break Jack Nicklaus' record or not.

He will.

It's now just a question of when he's going to do it.

Jack Nicklaus himself has said it.

"He will chase me all the way to the showers," said Nicklaus when Woods won his first of four Masters titles in 1997. "No doubt he will break my record."

The record is 18 majors.

The majors are the Masters, US Open, British Open and PGA.

Woods has 10 majors in his pocket, winning two of the first three this year.

After securing his fourth Masters victory in eight years last April, Woods nailed the British Open on Monday at St. Andrews in Scotland, where golf was born some 630 years ago.

Woods missed a perfect three this year when he finished second behind New Zealand's Michael Campbell last month in the US Open. A disobedient

putter was the culprit.

In the just-ended 134th British Open, the putter behaved and Woods ran away with a 5-shot margin on a 14-under-par total, scoring under-par on each of his four rounds (66-67-71-70) in the first wire-to-wire finish at the Open in 32 years.

"When Tiger's ahead of the pack, kiss your hopes goodbye," said Scotland's pride, Colin Montgomerie, who finished solo second behind Woods in his best performance at the Open.

Next month, Woods, the world No. 1, will gun for the PGA, a tournament he has won twice like the British Open and the US Open.

Woods is on course to shatter Nicklaus' record of 18 majors for two major reasons—and more.

One, Nicklaus was 32 when he won his 10th major. At 29, Woods has captured No. 10.

Two, the next five years will mean Woods will be in 20 majors, assuming nothing untoward happens to the guy.

Five years from now, Woods will only be

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza



34. Definitely, there's a lot of golf left in him at that age.

Didn't Nicklaus win his 18th major when he was 46 already? That was in the 1986 Masters.

I see two reasons why Woods can't win eight majors in the next five years.

First, God forbid, that he dies.

Second, God forbid, that he quits.

Woods is the most unique athlete of his time, if not of all time.

After winning his first Masters, the world's most exclusive golf event—in record-breaking fashion yet—Woods revamped his swing.

You can't find anyone in any sport doing that.

Did Michael Jordan change his aerial antics after winning one, two, even three of his six NBA championship rings?

Nope.

Or, did Muhammad Ali revamp his lethal 1-2 combinations during the course of his reign as world heavyweight champion—three times at that?

Nope.

Not once but twice did Woods overhaul his swing. If that's not incredible enough, what is?

Two years ago, with six majors already tucked under his belt, Woods went to Hank Haney and asked Hank to redo his swing again.

Nearly 24 months later, the move that shocked the world for the second time started reaping dividends.

With two majors won this year, Woods is on the way to eclipsing Nicklaus' record of 18 majors.

"I've been criticized for the last couple of years—why would I change my game?"

said Woods. "This is why: First, second and first in the last three majors, that's why."

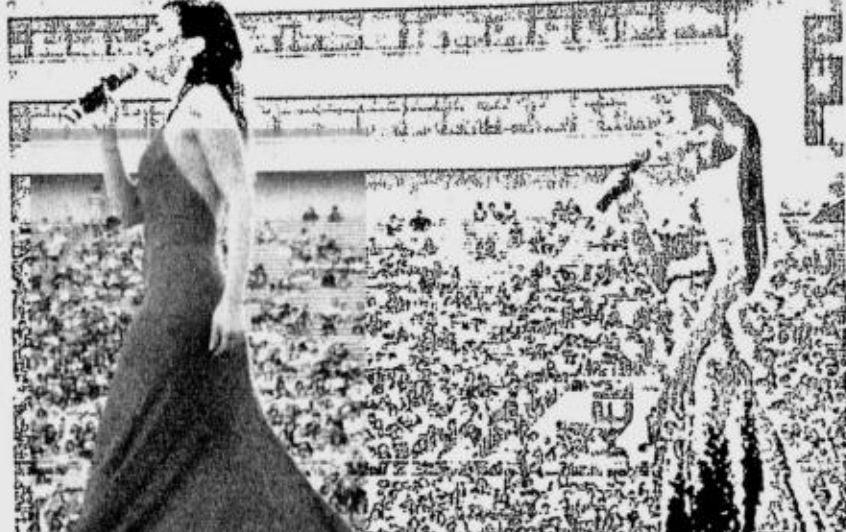
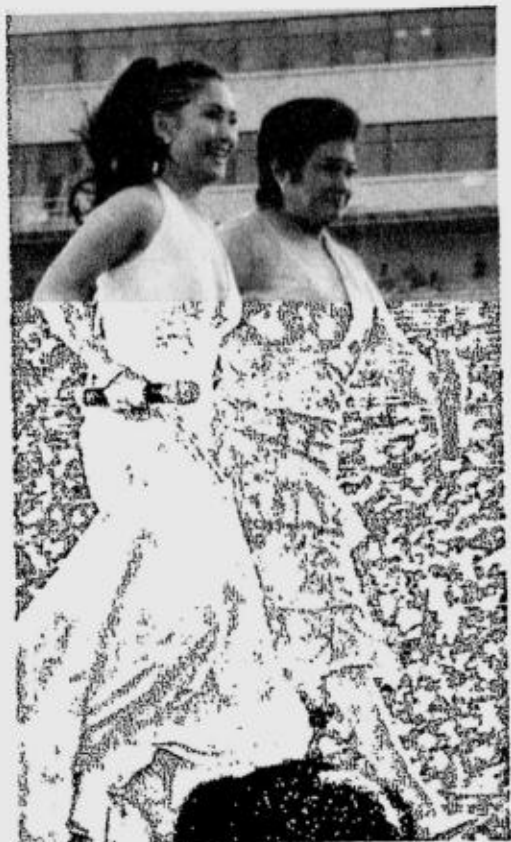
Who can now stop this inexorable march to greatness?

Alas, no one. You can't block any shot fired by Tiger Woods.

In golf, you can't play defense.

FASTBREAK. The remains of Jake's mother, Blanca Pineda Ayson, will be laid to rest today. A 2 p.m. Mass at the Good Shepherd in San Fernando, Pampanga, will precede the burial. "She went peacefully right after a priest gave her the Last Rites," said Jake, the executive director of the National Golf Association of the Philippines. "She just closed her eyes and that was it." When Jake's mother turned 92 last April in San Antonio, Arayat, I was there. Ima was beautiful even in old age. I kissed her hand as usual before I partook of the sumptuous lunch prepared by Atchie Pat, Jake's wife. Bye, Ima. Up there, please pray for us.

E-mail your comments at menju@pltdsl.net



STAR-STUDED (from left): Sheryn Regis, Nora Aunor; Lea Salonga; Jasmine Trias and Martin Nievera; Zsa Zsa Padilla and Kuh Ledesma; Judy Ann and her new love, Ryan Agoncillo

CROWD Pleasers (from left) Diether Ocampo, Sheryn, Erik Santos, Toni, Jericho Rosales, Kuh and Gary Valenciano



Unprecedented!

From page A26

newcomer Nikki Gil and Toni Gonzaga. Performing in a seemingly endless series of production numbers were The Hunks (Jericho Rosales, Diether Ocampo, Piolo Pascual and Carlos Agassi), Vina Morales, Rachel Alejandro, Singing Champions Erik Santos and Sheryn Regis, Judy Ann Santos, Roxanne Guinoo, Nikki Gil and Joross Gamboa.

Lea Salonga, Jasmine Trias, Nora Aunor and Antoinette Taus topped the guest list. The Hunks' numbers were among the most applauded, drawing screams and exciting the large crowd. Vina Morales was a revelation! She held us in rapt attention with her singing and dancing skills, stage presence and, most especially, her obvious joy in performing.

Excellent performers

Gary Valenciano and Martin Nievera, always excellent performers, gained extra points when they joined Jasmine Trias in a fresh, engaging number. Lea gave a touch of class to the proceedings with "New York State of Mind," a seemingly surprise song choice for this show.

But with her exquisite style, unmatched phrasing and diction and a bit of jazzy riffing toward the end of the Billy Joel hit, Lea captivated the audience.

Nora, who sang her old reliable, "People," visibly enjoyed being the object of song tributes when Vina and Sheryn Regis joined her onstage and sang "The Impossible Dream" and "The Greatest Performance of My Life," re-

spectively.

The Superstar, mired in one controversy after another, clarified one more issue: "Meron po akong working visa." There had been talk that she couldn't perform as announced because she did not have a permit to be in the show.

Prior to the main show, US-based comedian Fe delos Reyes courageously took the stage, solo, for a full hour and made the oppressive heat a little more bearable for the enthusiastic audience.

ABS-CBN executive Raffy Lopez handed a check of \$25,000 to a raffle winner, Honesto Valencia, a *kapamilya*—TFC's term for a subscriber to its cable service. TFC airs ABS-CBN's shows in the US. Another lucky TFC subscriber won a brand-new Honda Civic.

The Filipinos' joy in watching the show was evident. Everywhere this reporter turned, there was open-mouthed appreciation of the talents onstage.

At a dinner in a Pasadena hotel following the show, Gary V summed it best for INQUIRER Entertainment: "I was moved by the faces, especially from what I could see in front of the stage. When we signed autographs before the show, they kept saying, 'Thank you for coming to us!'"

Judy Ann agreed, exclaiming, "I was so happy to see *ang dami-daming* Pinoy! Na-appreciate ko talaga that everybody took the time to be with us."

Biggest crowd

Vina exulted, "Our *kababayans* were so patient. At iba ang dating nila! They were so excited!" Rachel likewise expressed excitement over performing in such a large stadium, an elation shared by many in the cast. "This is the biggest venue I have played in so far," the singer said. Jasmine declared, "This was an entirely different experience because it was a live show in a stadium." The West Coast two-city tour, dubbed "Kapamilya Summer Caravan sa America" moves on to San Francisco on Saturday, July 23, at the Monster Park Fairgrounds. This time ABS-CBN will bring in the live edition of "The Buzz," with hosts Boy Abunda and Kris Aquino. David Pomeranz and Angela Bofill are the special guests.

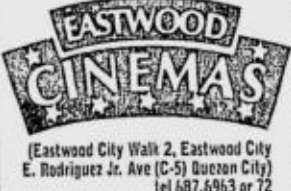
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4 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR GP
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5 (DOLBY) IF ONLY PG-13



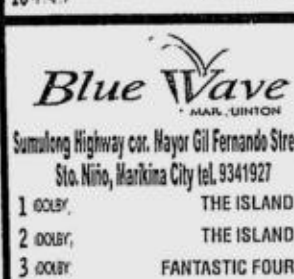
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6 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS
7 (DOLBY) THE ISLAND
8 (DOLBY) NEW POLICE STORY
9 (DOLBY) IF ONLY
10 (DOLBY) EVIL DEAD



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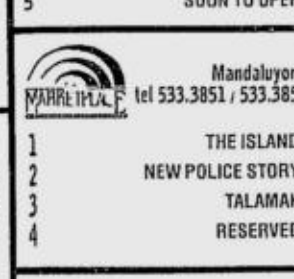
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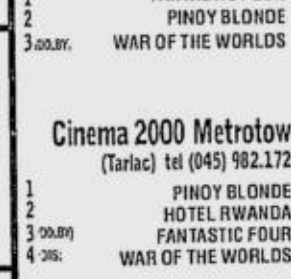
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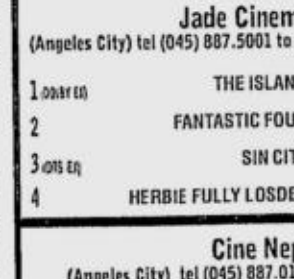
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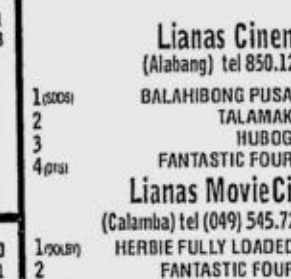
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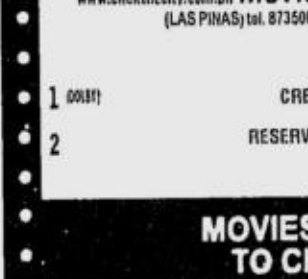
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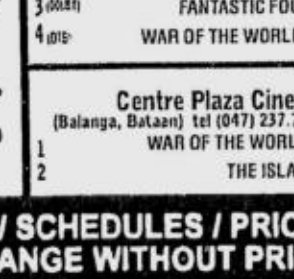
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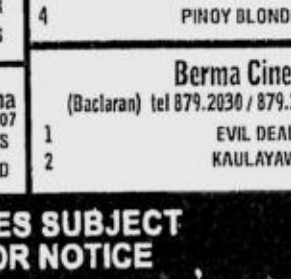
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1 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
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4 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR



1 (DOLBY) TAGOS SA LAMAN
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3 (DOLBY) MONSTER IN LAW
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THE EVIL DEAD
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4 **WAR OF THE WORLDS**
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5 **THE EVIL DEAD**
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9 EVIL DEAD

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8 WAR OF THE WORLDS

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G4	SMART	1	IF ONLY	2	NEW POLICE STORY	3	THE ISLAND	4	FANTASTIC 4
GB1	CEBU	1	IF ONLY	2	THE ISLAND	3	THE ISLAND	4	FANTASTIC 4
GB3	CEBU	1	IF ONLY	2	THE ISLAND	3	HERBIE: FULLY LOADED	4	THE ISLAND
ATC	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1	IF ONLY	2	THE ISLAND	3	HERBIE: FULLY LOADED	4	THE ISLAND
ACC	AYALA CENTER CEBU	1	THE ISLAND	2	HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY	3	ALONE IN THE DARK	4	FANTASTIC 4

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- 3 If Only
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- 6 Fantastic 4
- 7 The Island

EVENTS! EVENTS!



Child psychologists needed

THESE past weeks, we've seen official media regulators rapping TV people for their on-camera excesses, finally making broadcast people realize that they can no longer ride roughshod over viewers' sensibilities as they do anything and everything to enable their shows to grab the highest ratings.

This development is noteworthy, but it is only partially effective because it doesn't address the problem head-on: Some TV people do irresponsible work because they haven't been properly taught by their bosses how to serve their audience ethically and well.

In fact, those very bosses are the ones who sometimes pressure their people to throw caution discretion and self-possession to the winds in order to crush the competition and attain those all-important top viewership ratings.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre



So, our networks have to devise a more foolproof and "avarice-proof" way to compel their staffers to tread the straight and narrow. In our view, one of the best ways to do this is for each network to secure the services of a child psychologist.

Our logic goes this way: Adult viewers' sensibilities are important, but they can always switch to another channel if a network's pro-

gram offends them. Children, however, are less capable of protecting themselves, so they are the viewers who should be most protected from irresponsible and unethical TV practices.

To make sure that nothing a network telecasts has a negative effect on young viewers, each channel should hire a child psychologist whose job it would be to screen everything the channel produces and shows, and point out which elements of video and audio would be offensive to children.

We can all surmise to the best of our ability what would or wouldn't comprise child-friendly television, but child psychologists are trained to determine this on a much more professional and reliable level, so we should listen to them.

After all, the well-being of our youth is at stake. We profess to care about them so much, so our channels should consider this significant step in truly complying with the terms of their franchise to operate.

The first channel to do this would win the appreciation and gratitude of concerned parents and educators, and this would be a big plus point for the network.

Any takers?

While we're at it, we would also like to repeat a suggestion we made sometime ago, that President Macapagal-Arroyo should appoint more child psychologists to the MTRCB. Our argument is the same: we need to protect our children from irresponsible TV-film work, child psychologists are best suited to this all-important task, so let's make use of their expertise!

Movies on TV

On HBO, July 21 at 7:45 a.m., "Passionada." 6 p.m., "Changing Lanes." July 22 at 2 p.m., "My House in Umbria." 6:55 p.m., "Superman II." 9 p.m., "Lost in Translation." 10:40 p.m., "The Matrix Revolutions."

On Cinemax, July 21 at 6 a.m., "Batteries Not Included." 11:15 a.m., "The Firm." 3:30 p.m., "The Bourne Identity." July 22 at 6:30 a.m., "The Hunt for Red October." 2:15 p.m., "Fahrenheit 451."

'Something to Crow About'

THE LATEST edition of Alejandro R. Roces' stories will be launched under the title "Something to Crow About" by the International Organization of Folk Arts Philippines Foundation on July 22 at the Manila Peninsula's Conservatory. IOFA director Elvira Yap Go helped publish the new book.

The book is IOFA's first major project to help preserve and promote Philippine literature that delves into folk culture and traditions. IOFA has showcased and popularized indigenous practices, arts, crafts, songs and dances as its contribution to preserve the national heritage, especially for the youth.

"Something to Crow About" offers a dozen lighthearted and entertaining stories written by Roces. In her foreword to the book, IOFA president Rosario Limcaoco asserts that the stories represent a window to Filipino culture, and are extraordinary in the way they capture the nuances and spirit of life in this country.



SOAPDISH BAND

New kid on the block

V3 IS a new music label bent on making its mark in the alternative block. Behind it is Mony Romana, a longtime player in the music industry. Romana is bringing in his experience from successful international acts such as Linkin Park, Sugar Ray, Matchbox 20, Oasis, Silverchair and local acts such as Wolfgang and Hungry Young Poets.

The label will be managing a lean roster of artists, cutting three record deals a year. The label's first signings include Soapdish and Protein Shake, two bands currently making waves in the local alternative gridiron.

Soapdish's first single "Ewan Ko" has entered the NU107 charts in less than a month.

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NOW SHOWING

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GRAB YOUR HANKIES, GIVE YOURSELF A GOOD CRY!

Jennifer Love Hewitt **Paul Nicholls**

If Only

What if... life gives you a second chance... to love the one you lost?

ENTERTAINMENT

Unprecedented!



MARTIN Nievera works up the crowd.

By Ruben V. Nepales
Los Angeles Correspondent
Photos By Janet Susan R. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—In a venue that hosted several NFL (National Football League) Super Bowl Games, Olympic soccer matches and the most popular rock bands and performers, ABS-CBN and TFC (The Filipino Channel) staged on Saturday evening an unprecedented star-studded overseas edition of "ASAP '05 Live."

An estimated crowd of 25,000 to 30,000 people came to watch what

ABS-CBN brings to LA the biggest Pinoy live variety show ever presented in Southern California

may have been the biggest Filipino show ever presented in Southern California at the historic Rose Bowl in Pasadena. As the LA area continued to endure a heat wave, thousands of Filipinos braved the sizzling temperature in the low 100s to meet ABS-CBN's stars in booths erected on the

football field.

Other spectators secured seats in the stadium before the show began at about 5 p.m. Under a blazing sun that seemed to intensify the proceedings onstage, the stars came out one by one to roaring cheers from the huge audience.

"ASAP Mania" hosts Gary Valenciano, Martin Nievera, Kuh Ledesma and Zsa Zsa Padilla led the impressive talent lineup. (On Tuesday at 3 a.m. L.A. time, Gary V suffered a hypoglycemic attack while he was sleeping. He was rushed to a nearby hospital in Pasadena where his condition was stabilized. Hours later, Mr. Pure Energy was fully recovered and already shopping, according to sister Gina Martinez.) Junior hosts for the evening were Ryan Agoncillo, very promising

VINA Morales struts her stuff.



UNPRECEDENTED/A22

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
SUNDAY, JULY 24, 2005



club 3
Saturday 8pm
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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
NBN					Telediyaryo	Valde Vision													
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Pasion de Amor	Mr. Bean	Nanolo	Opids	Motor Garden Season 2	TV Patrol World	Environmental Documentary	Telediyaryo	Kampanerang Kuba	Green Rose	Old Fiel Young	Business & Leisure	Magsasa Mo Kaya	ESPN Golf	Insider
ABC 5			EZ Shop		FIBA (Rounds)					American Idol			The Best Of Guinness Book Of Records		Big News		Inq TV		
GMA 7	Saang Sukol Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	Terjho Tonga	Sharon King	Full Metal Alchemist	Full House	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna		Sugo	Atic Cat	MagsakaManan			
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberryes	Sponge Bob	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	WWE Smackdown		Dalysine Specials		The Gidd		Newsweek Now	Video Hi Parade	Kasaysayan Mo Ang Lahat	Police Hour
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot	Goat Of The Kingdom					TM Phil 9-Bat			IBC News	Evening Devotions	
SBN 21		Morph TV		Shepards Voke		SBN Sing Along		Batman Beyond	Goat Of The Kingdom	Wazzup Wazzup	Birds Of Prey								
Studio 23																			
MTV Philippines	MTV Jams	Dismissed # 617	MTV Get Spotted		Boys Point # 203	My MYX		Harmon Out at Take 5	MYX Backtrak	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Daily Top 10		MTV Lokel	Crits # 1113		MTV Lokel	MTV Play	Chiefs On The Go
MYX	Star MYX	Urban MYX	Rock MYX	OPM MYX															
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live				World News	World Sport	World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	Global Office		World News Asia	MYX Backtrak	Mellow MYX
ESPN			Major League Baseball																
Solar Sports		TV Shopping																	
Sports Plus																			
Cinemax																			
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Strong Medicine		The Bourne Identity				Framed	Mad About You	Boothed	The Nanny	Two Weeks Notice (7-15 PM)		Fever	Frankenstein		NASCAR New England 300 Miles		
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Ani Attack/Unlabeled Bunnies		YCA: The Fairytale	Sesame Street	Buzz Lightyear Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	George Of The Jungle 2		So Little Time	Sabrina: The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chop N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Transum Planet
Discovery Channel		Hour Asia			First Time Film Makers	Hour China	Wild Discovery		Wild Weather										
National Geographic		Frontiers Of Construction		Marine Machine				Asteroids	Wildlife Doctores	Hayden Turner's Wildlife Challenge	Wow! Fox City	Wow! Fox City	About Asia		National Geographic	Johnny Bravo	Time Squad	Thundercats	Ten Titans
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Teen Titans	SD Gundam Force	Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		Yakky Yak	Rocky Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberryes	Rugrats
Nickelodeon	Buss Chus	Rugrats		The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Hot Off The Grill	100 Days of Eddie McCloud	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Days of Eddie McCloud	The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron	Early Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger		Good Finds	Life & Style	El Tio	The Angry Birds	Back To Basics
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fild		Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Home Improvement	Ultimate Guinness World Records	Ultimate Guinness World Records	Ultimate Guinness World Records	The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Bestmaster		Growing Up Gals	Rock Star	Arrest Development	Friends	Invasion Iowa
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		CSI NY (Season 1)	Hollywood Squares	CSI NY (Season 1)				CSI Factor (Season 1)									
AXN		Four Fingers (Season 1)																	
JackTV	Just For Laughs	Just For Laughs		Ride With Funk Master Flex	Arts In The Parks	Arts In The Parks				Cinequest	Family Guy	Mad TV							
ETC		Significant Others		Knock First						Seinfeld	Good Morning Mami	Committed							
HBO	The Truth About Charlie (2-45 PM)									Changin' Lanes									
Star Movies																			
Cinema One																			
EWTV	A Christian Pilgrimage To Jordan	Sa Bito Walang Kapansin (3-15 PM)	Suffering Church	Angel Force	Children's Rosary	Anak	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angeline and the Nuns of Our Lady of Angels Monastery	The Spirit Of Catholic Leadership	Saints: A Closer Look	EWTV Gallery	Magkapalad	EWTV Live With Father Mitch Peace							

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WHAT'S INSIDE
Foreign mine firms remain bullish, infuse \$340M in RP /B3
IFC reaffirms commitment to RP dev't agenda /B4

THURSDAY,
JULY 21, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B3

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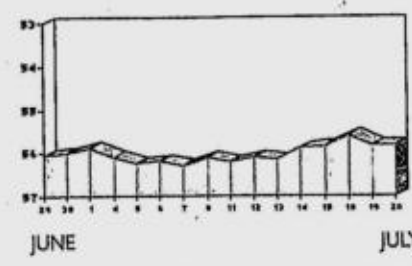
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Finance chief to mediate in EPCIB row

INDICATORS CURRENCIES



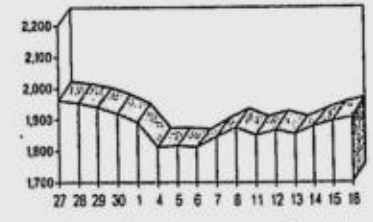
PESO-DOLLAR RATE
P 55.830 = \$1
As of 5 p.m., July 20, 2005
P 113.09 = \$1
As of 3 p.m., July 20, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Shares jump 2.92% as political tensions ease



SHARE prices rose sharply yesterday, closing 2.92 percent higher as investors aggressively bought into companies expected to post strong first-half results against a backdrop of easing political concerns, dealers said.



A calmer political environment following weeks of opposition efforts to topple President Macapagal-Arroyo helped sentiment and allowed the market to snap back after recent losses.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 55.16 points to 1,947.12 after trading between 1,889.55 and 1,947.12. Volume was 297.36 million shares worth P1.2 billion. The broader all-shares index rose 22.91 points to 1,175.02.

Gainers beat losers 57 to 16, with 35 stocks unchanged.

"There are a lot of reasons to accumulate (stocks) again. For one, the political tension has somewhat eased. Investors are also looking forward to strong results ... despite the impact of higher oil prices and a weaker peso," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities Inc.

Investors appear to have welcomed President Arroyo's announcement yesterday that she would form a commission to probe poll-cheating charges as a sign that the government was intent on resolving the issue.

Ms Arroyo has been under pressure to step down after the opposition released audiotapes which they claimed prove that she cheated to win the 2004 elections.

"Apparently, the impression in the market is that the government is trying to be transparent about the issue. For investors, this seems to be an acceptable way of alleviating the current political tension," said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities.

Long-drawn court battle to hurt bank

By Doris C. Dumlaog and Daxim L. Lucas

NEWLY installed Finance Secretary Margarito Teves will meet with feuding shareholders of Equitable PCIBank to help fend off a long-drawn court battle that could hurt the bank.

The group challenging the legitimacy of the Go family's hold on the bank includes the state-owned pension funds Social Security System and Government Employees Insurance Corp.

MVP named chair of Makati Med

By Clarissa S. Batino



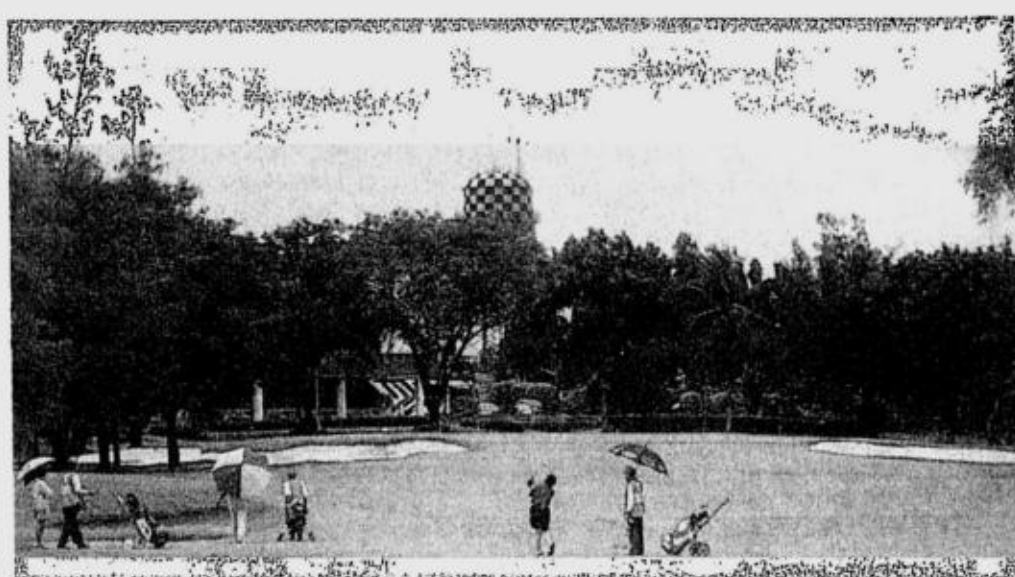
PANGILINAN

TELECOM czar Manuel V. Pangilinan is now the chair of the beleaguered Makati Medical Center, adding the ailing hospital to a list of "problematic" projects that he hoped would turn out successful like his telecom ventures.

"Yes, I have accepted the chairmanship of Makati Med," Pangilinan said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

Pangilinan was responsible for having reversed the decline of telecom giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and successfully revived once comatose Pilipino Telephone Corp.

He chairs PLDT, Smart and Piltel as well as the recovering Metro Pacific Corp. and Negros Navigation.



A MARRIOTT hotel will soon rise in Megaworld Corp.'s Newport City, a mixed-use property development project adjacent to the Villamor golf course.

Megaworld, Marriott to build hotel off Villamor golf course

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PROPERTY developer Megaworld Corp. is building a 350-room hotel in Pasay City, its anchor project in its 25-hectare urban resort project.

The hotel will carry the Marriott brand and will be on Megaworld's mixed-use "Newport City" at the Villamor air base in Pasay City.

Megaworld told the Securities and Exchange Commission that it had signed a memorandum of understanding with Marriott Hotels International B.V., which owns the Marriott chain of first-class, full-service hotels worldwide.

Megaworld is tapping Marriott to manage the hotel as part of the Marriott Hotels, Resorts & Suites group.

Megaworld also wants Marriott to act as its technical adviser during the planning, designing, construction and furnishing stages of the project.

Newport City, bounded by Andrews Av-

enue and Sales Street, borders the Villamor golf course on the east side and faces the new terminal of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on the west side. It is a five-minute drive from Magallanes Village in Makati City.

"Newport City will be comparable to Asia's most exciting hotel-and-golf resorts," said Megaworld investor relations officer John Hao. "Guests at the Marriott Hotel will enjoy unobstructed front-row views of the 18-hole Villamor golf course."

Megaworld is currently in talks with a top foreign hotel interior design group for the interiors including the grand lobby of the Marriott Hotel, Hao also said.

Aside from a first-class hotel, the Newport City urban resort project will host a low-density residential area, an office park, a themed shopping and entertainment hub and an institutional center.

JULY 1-31, 2005.

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Rule of the majorette

YOU millions of SSS and GSIS members out there may have jumped for joy after hearing that the Go family tried to force their way into taking control of the board of Equitable PCI Bank.

What the Go family did, together with their allies in the old board, during the annual stockholders meeting the other day, thankfully, was fully covered by media.

Again, that is the group owning only 25 percent of the bank, although it insists on assigning "treasury shares" all to themselves.

On the other hand, the GSIS and the SSS, having invested our contribution to the pension funds, own roughly 39 percent.

Together with other stockholders, such as the companies of Henry Sy and the Romualdez family, the GSIS and the SSS claimed to represent the majority.

Again, the Go family tried to frustrate the will of the apparent majority. What's that—rule of the majorette?

ANYWAY, the Go family again tried to railroad the elections of board members, which puts the score at six years in a row, perhaps breaking world records for board election railroading.

The family's majorettes merely used old style corporate diplomacy, such as by threatening to throw out stockholders who would not follow the wishes of the family.

Down here in my barangay, the guys that contributed what could have been food money to the SSS and the GSIS, have a simple word for it. And that is, "garapal."

Some of our contacts in business, particularly among the Chinese-Filipinos, thus could not believe that the Go family members would willingly destroy their reputation.

Well, I have news for them: Word is going

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

around that the Go family is already exploring ways to sell out of the bank.

ACCORDING to my friends in banking, the Go family has asked a foreign financial institution to package the sale of its 25-percent holdings in the bank.

The foreign institution does investment house business in Manila, although it is a big bank—one of the biggest in the world—with its headquarters in Europe.

Apparently, the Go family already figured out that it has only two ways to end the stockholders squabble in Equitable PCI.

They either buy out SSS and GSIS, or they get out. And based on the word in banking, the family does not want to cough up cash to buy out GSIS and the SSS.

And so, the story goes, by trying to control the board elections the other day, the family seemed to be telling the public that it still controls the bank.

The chair in the past couple of years, Tony Go, must keep his position, for instance, and so must other directors nominated by the family.

That way, the Gos probably hope to fetch a good price for their holdings in the bank. After all, they are selling a minority position. This can hardly command a premium.

Buyers normally pay a premium only for majority control of a bank, because then they can get control of everything, including the

majorettes.

AND so reports (not in this newspaper) implying that the family would only need boardroom maneuvers to keep control of the bank, may be a bit exaggerated.

The fight now moves to the judiciary, as both the Go family, on the one hand, and the SSS-GSIS-Romualdez-Sy combine, on the other, must try to earn legitimacy for their respective board elections.

The two groups went ahead to elect their own boards. This usually happens in any stockholders feud. In the end, only a court decision can say which group has the legitimate board.

Now, if the sellout of the Go family pushes through, can it mean a fresh start between the buyer and the GSIS and the SSS?

Actually, much will depend on who the buyer will be. At the moment, only a few groups have the means to buy the Go family holdings.

Even fewer are interested in acquiring a 25-percent interest in a bank rocked by feud among stockholders for the past years.

For instance, the SSS-GSIS-Romualdez-Sy group called for an audit of all subsidiaries of the bank. Nobody knows what kind of surprises will come out of it.

IN particular, the SSS-GSIS-Romualdez-Sy group may be zeroing in on Equitable Card Network, the credit card company 90-percent owned by Equitable PCI.

The company has roughly 1.2 million cardholders, contributing P400 million a year in income to the parent bank.

The group has been saying that, for instance, another card company that only had 300,000 to 400,000 cardholders made as much money as Equitable Card Network.

Moreover, the Go family handpicked the directors of Equitable PCI who could sit in the board of the credit card company.

That was, in fact, the main reason cited by the SEC in disqualifying certain nominees of the Go family for "independent directors" of the bank. They were also sitting in the board of certain Equitable PCI bank subsidiaries.

One of them was former Foreign Affairs Secretary Roberto Romulo, who claimed he was an "independent director," although this time, the Go family version of the board named him a "regular" director.

I mean, after all this time he has been masquerading as an "independent director," representing public interest in the bank, did Bob Romulo this time show his true color or what?

STILL, the former "independent director" Bob Romulo continued his attack against the GSIS and the SSS, for instance, for going to bed with the Romualdez family.

The son of Kokoy Romualdez, a young lawyer named Martin, is a board member of Equitable PCI, representing about 7 percent interest in the bank, owned by a company called Trans Middle East, which apparently

belongs to the Romualdez family.

The young Romualdez reportedly has been questioning the way the Go family was running the bank, particularly the deals between certain companies owned by the family and the bank itself.

And so Romulo was talking about the Romualdez connection to the Marcos regime. Really? But look who is talking? Somehow people have always associated the name "Romulo" also with the Marcos regime.

Of course, the pension funds SSS and GSIS have no choice but to ally with other stockholders of bank, if only to bring about some reforms.

BY the way, presidential daughter Luli Arroyo, said to be the most lovable of the Arroyo children, is said to have packed her bags from one of the many foundations of Romulo.

Whether Equitable PCI also contributes to those foundations, is a question to which the SSS-GSIS-Romualdez-Sy group wants some answers.

For Bob Romulo claims that he is the "assassin" for the Go family. It's his job, I know, and somebody has to do it.

One of the victims was said to be Degracias Vistan, who was recruited by the government side to manage the bank some years ago, but who wanted the Go family to answer for the damage caused by Equitable Leasing

STOCKS

	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	50,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	29.5	29.5	29	29	1,100,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	48.5	50	48.5	50	2,011,300
China Banking Corp.	750	750	750	750	2,170
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	400
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.52	0.53	0.51	0.53	310,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	49.5	49.5	48.5	49	248,400
International Exch. Bank	19	19	19	19	5,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27.5	27.5	27	27	1,548,000
Philippine National Bank	46	47	46	47	218,800
Phil. Savings Bank	32	32	30	32	7,800
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
Security Bank Corp.	26	26	26	26	2,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	29	29	29	29	2,900
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2775	2775	2775	2775	170
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	120,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1970	1990	1970	1990	2,000

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12	12.5	12	12.5	116,100
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1	1.02	1	1	620,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	840	860	840	850	36,130
Iglophil Inc.	2.95	3.15	2.95	2.95	73,000
Philippine Tel. Corp.	2.65	2.7	2.6	2.7	3,099,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	5,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1550	1575	1545	1560	267,740
Philweb Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	1,700,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.25	14.5	14.25	14.5	46,700
Manila Electric Co. B	24.25	24.75	24.25	24.5	1,047,700
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.6	6,806,000
Petron Corp.	3	3.1	2.95	3.05	3,989,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	111,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	5,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.9	7.9	7.7	7.7	1,355,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	100,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.05	1.06	1.06	1.06	50,000

CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	50,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	2.85	3.1	2.85	3.1	206,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.3	36,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	8,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	31.5	32.5	31.5	32.5	453,800
San Miguel Pure Foods A	56	56	56	56	100
San Miguel Corp. A	61	62	60.5	62	424,100
San Miguel Corp. B	94.5	102	94.5	101	188,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000

HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	3,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdq A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	2,005,000
Ayala Corp.	302.5	315	302.5	315	145,170
Aboliz Equity Ventures	4.9	4.95	4.85	4.95	5,294,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	6,800,000
APC Group Inc.	1.84	1.86	1.84	1.86	100,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.18	0.235	0.18	0.235	140,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.82	0.75	0.76	3,440,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	130,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	9,536,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	950,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.235	0.23	0.235	270,000
Phil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	2.3	2.32	2.3	2.32	1,077,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	6.9	7.2	6.9	7.1	1,143,000
Global Equities Inc.	42	43.5	42	43.5	620,500
Ionics Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	300,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	60,000
Megaworld Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	110,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	1.28	1.32	1.28	1.3	3,809,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	7,040,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	280,000
SM Investments Corp.	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.225	500,000
Unilindo Holdings Inc.	226	227	222	223	249,780
Wetex Industries Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	800,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.13	0.135	0.12	0.135	4,140,000
	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	200,000

MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
Macdonay Plastics Inc.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	4,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.095	0.1	1,900,000
Parasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	12,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.95	0.96	0.94	0.96	4,360,000
Accessit Phils Hotel Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	1,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	240,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.3	1.32	1.28	1.28	2,550,000

BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABT-BSN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	12.25	12.5	12.25	12.5	902,200
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	7,300
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.8	8	7.8	7.9	10,864,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.87	0.89	0.87	0.89	200,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	200,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.195	0.195	110,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.35	11,900,000
Fillinvest Land Inc.	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.4	3,550,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.19	0.195	0.19	0.195	400,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	400,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	300,000
SM Development Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.4	1.68	80,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.1	7.3	7.1	7.3	9,398,000

MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.007	0.0065	0.007	65,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min. & Dev't	4.85	4.85	4.85	4.85	20,000
Banquet Corp. A	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	10,000
Lapanto Cons. Mng. Co A	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	1,240,000
Lapanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	280,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	31,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	20,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.79	0.8	0.79	0.8	220,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.9	0.9	0.89	0.9	1,550,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28.5	29	28.5	28.5	792,300
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	28,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	19,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	30,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	20,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.9	3	2.9	3	199,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.125	0.13	4,680,000
Vulcan Ind't	0.32	0.36	0.32	0.33	1,190,000

CURRENCIES

July 20, 2005		Euro	Dollar	Peso
Country	Unit	Equivalent	Equivalent	Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.830772	1.000000	55.6840
Japan	Yen	0.007372	0.008874	0.4941
United Kingdom	Pound	1.445709	1.740200	96.9013
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.106816	0.128574	7.1595
Switzerland	Franc	0.639448	0.769704	42.8602
Canada	Dollar	0.681128	0.819874	45.6539
Singapore	Dollar	0.492076	0.592312	32.9823
Australia	Dollar	0.622161	0.748895	41.7015
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.203756	2.652661	147.7108
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.221527	0.266652	14.8482
Brunei	Dollar	0.490623	0.590563	32.8849
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000102	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.019799	0.023832	1.3271
UAE	Dirham	0.226214	0.272294	15.1624
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.203700	67.0268
Argentina	Peso	0.290479	0.349650	19.4699
Brazil	Real	0.354879	0.427168	23.7864
Denmark	Kroner	0.134023	0.161324	8.9832
India	Rupee	0.019107	0.022999	1.2807
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.218636	0.263172	14.6545
Mexico	New Peso	0.078348	0.094307	5.2514
New Zealand	Dollar	0.558678	0.672721	37.4598
South Africa	Rand	0.124040	0.149307	8.3140
Korea	Won	0.000796	0.000958	0.0533
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025945	0.031230	1.7390

Foreign mine firms remain bullish, infuse \$340M in RP

By Ronnel W. Domingo

FOREIGN mining firms are undeterred with the current political situation and remain committed to their investments plans here, according to the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines.

CMP president Benjamin Philip G. Romualdez said in a briefing that a total of \$339.7 million worth of investments have been poured in the 23 projects that the local industry have promoted through various international roadshows.

Romualdez said the investments represented projects that have either started operations or were in the development and construction phases of work.

The CMP chief, along with Presidential Adviser on Mining Development Delia Albert, said that with projects such as Coral Bay nickel venture in Palawan having started operations, mining firms were optimistic that the sector would rebound soon.

The \$180-million Coral Bay

project, which involves the processing of low grade nickel ore in Bataraza town, was inaugurated last April.

"Investors (are not affected by our political problems)," Romualdez said. "These are long-time investors with projects that last for 20 to 30 years."

He said projects in the construction and development phase include the Akle cement project of Eagle Cement Corp., which has brought in \$14.7 million, and the Masbate gold project of Filminera worth \$11.6 million.

Other important projects expected to start before the year ends and early in 2006 are the \$171-million Toledo copper project; the \$19-million project of Surigao Integrated Resources, and Philex Mining Corp.'s Sto. Tomas II expansion worth at least \$10 million.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources said in a report issued yesterday that the nickel project of Surigao Integrated Resources was set to start construction work in September, while the \$66-million

Didipio copper project project would start construction in early 2006.

Ongoing final feasibility studies or review include those on the Siana gold project of JCG Resources Corp. in Benguet Corp.'s King-King mine in Compostela Valley; Nonoc mines of Pacific Nickel Philippines in Surigao del Norte, and Sagittarius Mines Inc.'s Tampakan copper project

in South Cotabato.

Also, projects whose final review and feasibility would start in the second half of 2005 include the Colet copper-gold project in Negros and the former Masara gold mine in Davao del Norte.

Finance chief to mediate . . . From page B1

ment Service Insurance System and the Romualdez family's Trans Middle-East Philippine Equities Inc. (TMEQ).

In an interview with the INQUIRER yesterday, Teves said he would meet with SSS president Cora dela Paz and GSIS president Winston Garcia as well as with Bangko Sentral Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. to find a speedy resolution to the squabble, possibly through an out-of-court settlement.

"I'm open to anything that can lead to a workable solution before this leads to something serious and depositors getting edgy," Teves said.

The finance chief, who was sworn into office last Monday, said he was hopeful that the boardroom brawl would not have to go through a long legal process for resolution.

The two factions submitted separate disclosure reports to the local bourse of their respective stockholders' meetings, with the breakaway group electing Martin Romualdez as new chair while the group loyal to the Go family retained Antonio Go.

The BSP, for its part, said it would keep its hands off the matter as it expressed confidence that an imminent court battle would not disrupt the bank's operations. The Securities and Exchange Commission expressed the same stance.

"The BSP will be taking a look at the conditions of the bank but we don't expect this to affect the bank's day-to-day operations," a top BSP official said.

The two factions elected their own set of directors after the GSIS-SSS bloc, claiming to have pooled 54.6 percent of voting rights, walked out of a heated stockholders' meeting Tuesday after their attempt to unseat Antonio Go as chair was foiled by the corporate secretary, Nilo Divina.

Each group, which gave only five seats to the opposing side in their respective board elections, claimed that the other shareholders' meeting was "bogus." Both voted to keep the management team mostly intact, although the SSS-GSIS group appointed another corporate secretary, Pelagio Ricalde.

Divina, who was being accused by the opposing group of violating the will of the majority to favor the Gos, claimed that the breakaway group held only 44-percent voting rights and therefore fell

short of a quorum as against the 91.8-percent registered attendees to their meeting.

The Go group also voted the disputed 10.8-percent shares held by bank subsidiary EBC Investments Inc. and included its EBC's representation in determining whether a quorum existed.

The BSP has ordered the bank to immediately sell the disputed 10.8 percent, but Divina said EPCIBank had a pending request for a five-year extension of the sale.

Asked which set of board directors the BSP would recognize for purposes of compliance to its rules on directors, the BSP source said: "There is a proper forum under the Corporation Code to determine the succession. The bottom line is, there must be continuity."

However, industry watchers believed that things would most likely turn uglier before they get better. They predicted that EPCIB's non-aligned management team would have its hands full trying to shield the bank from the warring parties.

"It is obvious that this battle will now be fought in the courts," said Vincent Lazzatin, a fund manager at the Mutual Fund Management Co. of the Philippines. "We can only hope that it will be resolved sooner rather than later."

Despite their differences, both the Go family and the state pension funds separately appointed incumbent bank president Rene Buenaventura to another year in office.

This rare meeting of minds between the parties will buy EPCIB much needed time to insulate the bank's operations from the noisy boardroom fight.

"He is a professional manager and that is a positive development for the bank," according to Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP) executive director Leonilo Coronel. BAP, the umbrella organization for the country's commercial banks, is studiously keeping its neutrality but Coronel admitted that a prolonged legal battle would eventually affect the operations of any bank.

"Rene [Buenaventura] can only take so much," he said. "It will be very confusing for him, especially to determine which board he will take guidance from." The BAP official said the current situation at EPCIB was similar to the Philcomsat case where competing boards are jockeying for control of the company.

MVP named chair . . .

From page B1

gation Co. Pangilinan is managing head of Hong Kong's First Pacific Co. Ltd, a company he founded in the 1980s using the capital of the Salim family of Indonesia.

Makati Med's case, according to Pangilinan, was going to involve a lot of hard work.

"The quantum of its new funds and the terms of its debt restructuring are both works-in-progress," he said, referring to the once premier hospital. Pangilinan will hold his first Makati Med board meeting on July 26.

Pangilinan is one of six prospective investors that the hospital is counting on to infuse fresh capital. Makati Med urgently needs at least P100 million to restore some order into its finances.

The hospital's losses continued to mount, reaching P35 million in the first five months of 2005. Makati Med registered losses of about P300 million from 2002 to 2004.



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The quest to quickly implement a new business initiative and to have a more accurate prediction mechanism and analysis capability became inevitable because of the merger. This prompted BP/MS to seriously undertake a project which will deliver data analysis coming from the company's various data sources.

The analysis focused on three major concerns: budget, production, and losses. The team recognized the requirement for a business intelligence tool to implement the project. The company thus went through a thorough evaluation of at least 5 leading business intelligence tools available in the market. Equally considered were vendor support, technical environment and cost. This resulted in the choice of PowerOLAP. PowerOLAP is a significant leader in functional areas such as speed, accuracy, drill-down capability, complex calculation and multiple dimensions.

According to BP/MS executive assistant to the president Junichi Imai, "PowerOLAP enables us to do multi-dimensional analysis which is very helpful for our Motor Car Claims Control." Their previous tool went as far as extracting data from a single source. PowerOLAP delivers unprecedented capabilities in generating the different analytical, reportorial, and forecasting business models needed to augment the company's objective by merging information from disparate data sources further improving all aspects of the daily operations.

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The Dimension Hierarchy, a well-built function of PowerOLAP, determined the aggregation of BP/MS' dimension members even though the hierarchy is not present in their collective systems. As attested by BP/MS sales and marketing director Perfecto Domingo, "PowerOLAP is very helpful in the generation of daily production reports that allow us to monitor sales performance of the various distribution channels".

Cube Formulas is another strong feature of PowerOLAP which provides cutting edge agility complemented by passionate vendor support in creating a sophisticated loss analysis. The long research and tedious attempts to automate the company's systems came to an end with PowerOLAP.

BP/MS I.T. head Rowena Tobias said, "PowerOLAP has helped our I.T. Department in providing our company and officers with a tool that gives them the flexibility of analyzing their areas of concern in different viewpoints, with the least effort on our part. It has helped us in understanding our data better and thus, we are able to identify some areas for refinement."

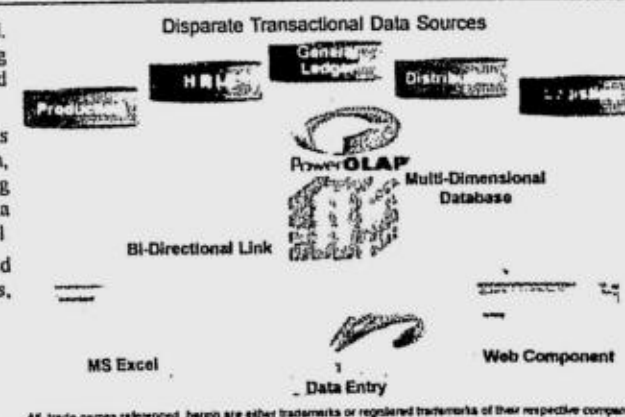
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According to BP/MS finance director Cora Bumanglag, "With PowerOLAP, we were able to reduce manpower costs and more timely and accurate reports were produced".

As BP/MS migrates to the new system and move forward to a dynamic future, the company will rely on PowerOLAP as one of the major technology tools which they will use to address their corporate forecasting, budgeting, analysis and reporting requirements.

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IFC reaffirms commitment to RP dev't agenda

By Michelle V. Remo

THE WORLD Bank's International Finance Corp. (IFC) said it was keeping its commitment to assist the Philippines in implementing its economic development programs despite the prevailing political concerns.

"IFC has been investing in the Philippines for 40 years. Events in the past few weeks are nothing compared with what happened in the last 40 years," said Vipul Bhagat, IFC country manager in the Philippines.

Bhagat said that for the current fiscal year, the IFC had allotted \$102 million in various assistance funds for the Philippines. This, he said, was higher than the previous year's \$90 million.

Despite the political jitters in the country brought about by scandals involving the Arroyo administration, Bhagat said the Philippines continued

to post relatively encouraging fundamentals. These include a 2004 gross domestic product growth of 6.1 percent, which was higher than the target.

Bhagat said the IFC, a unit of the World Bank that provides financial and technical assistance to the private sector, was focusing more on the long-term prospects of the Philippines rather than the short-term.

The ongoing political turmoil, he said, would likely have short-term economic effects.

"The Philippines is blessed with natural resources and talented people. We read what you (press) write, but we shrug them off and we go on (providing support to the Philippines)," he said in a press briefing yesterday at the launch of IFC's SME Asenso program.

He said the IFC and the World Bank were committed to help the govern-

ment in its poverty-reduction efforts.

It said that the IFC would like to focus its SME Asenso program on small businesses in Mindanao to help promote economic activity in the South.

The World Bank, itself, earlier expressed confidence in the sustainability of the Philippine government's economic and fiscal reform programs. Credit rating agencies said these programs were threatened by the ongoing political noise.

World Bank country director Joachim Amsberg said the multilateral agency would continue its lending programs for the Philippines, and was inclined to increase its financial support to the country if the fiscal situation would further improve.

He said the World Bank was willing to grant a Department of Finance request for a refinancing facility for the Philippines.

SMEs get funding support

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE COUNTRY'S program for the promotion and development of small and medium enterprises was given a boost with the signing of a memorandum of agreement between the government and the International Finance Corp. for an SME support facility worth \$12 million or about P670 million.

During the opening of the National SME Week at the Megatrade Hall of SM Megamall, Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila said that \$5 million of the amount would come from the IFC itself while the rest would come from the Canadian International Development Agency.

The fund is being extended through the IFC Assistance to Small and Medium Enterprises in the Philippines or IFC-Asenso.

"The amount will increase over the years, and it will go a long way toward increasing SMEs' access to finance, promotion of responsible business practices, and creation of sector-specific opportunities for sustainable growth," Favila said.

Also, the Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corp. reported that it was able to lend a total of P3.3 billion to SMEs under the SME Unified Lending Opportunities for National Growth or Sulong program.

The Sulong program is the financing component of the National SME Development Plan, participated by six government financing institutions, such as SB Corp., Land Bank of the Philippines, Development Bank of the Philippines, National Livelihood and Support Fund, Philippine Export-Import Bank and Quedan Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp.



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GMA 7 presses for P6.65M in Meralco refund

By Clarissa S. Batino

GMA Network Inc. is pressing Manila Electric Co. to refund the P6.65 million that it overcharged the broadcast firm from February 1994 to May 2003.

The amount, GMA 7 said in a statement, included interest charges.

In a memorandum filed with the Court of Appeals, GMA 7 and its affiliate, RGMA Network Inc., argued that they were entitled to receive interests on the overcharged amount.

GMA 7 claims P6.48 million while RGMA Network is collecting P179,727.58.

The two companies said Meralco should pay an interest of 6 percent yearly from February 1994 to April 2003, when the Supreme Court's refund order became final.

An interest of 12 percent yearly, the firms said, should be paid from April 2003 until the amount claimed is fully paid.

The Energy Regulatory Commission, however, ruled earlier that Meralco did not have to pay interest on the refund, saying the Supreme Court did not mention interest payment in its order.

This prompted GMA 7 to elevate its refund claim to the Court of Appeals.

Meralco had submitted to the ERC a 7-year settlement schedule for its institutional customers.

GMA 7 and RGMA claimed that Meralco's scheme was arbitrary and illegal.

GMA 7 lawyers said interest payment was imposed by law and it was not for the ERC to decide on it.

"It is just fair and moral for Meralco to pay interests (on the overcharged amount) as it had used and benefited from the money of its customers," said the broadcast firm.

RCBC resources up 10% in June

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp. said its resources as of June this year stood at P168.1 billion, 10.6 percent higher than end-2004 level.

In a statement, Rizalino S. Navarro, RCBC executive vice chair and CEO, said "the growth in resources was mainly due to the expansion of earning assets, such as investments in bonds and trading account securities that accounted for 59 percent or P9.5 billion of the bank's asset build-up."

Net loan portfolio improved by 5 percent or P5.4 billion, he said.

"Deposits, which remained steady at P109.8 billion, were complemented by the successful issuance of \$150 million in senior notes," bank president and COO Francisco S. Magsajo Jr. said.

This, he said, was in line with the bank's thrust to generate long-term funding to match investments with the same tenor.

"To improve the bank's asset quality, about P4.4 billion in non-performing loans (NPLs) were sold to two special purpose vehicles (SPVs) in 2004. Another P2.1 billion worth of NPLs were sold early this year," Magsajo said.

Breaktime

From page B2

to the bank's reputation.

The Go family owns Equitable Leasing. Why the Gos were allowed to use the name of the bank for their personal business, is still beyond me.

Anyway, Equitable Leasing got placements from high-net-worth individuals. It ran into trouble some years ago, when it could not meet all its obligations.

Vistan must have reasoned that since Equitable Leasing carried the same name as the bank, and it was in trouble, people would certainly think that the bank shared its problems. He was booted out in no time.

Romulo had other victims in Lenny de Jesus and Tony Villar, who were both GSIS nominees to the board some years ago.

Eventually, the Go family kept control of the board with the help of "independent directors" like Romulo, who this time the Go family named a "regular" director. And that is actually his true color.

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The complete schedule of activities is as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 25 - August 15, 2005
2. Pre-bid Conference	3PSMD-S-05-018 August 2, 2005 3:00 PM
3. Opening of Bids	3PSMD-S-05-018 August 16, 2005 9:00 AM

Bid Documents will be available to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P500.00 minimum, or 0.01% of the ABC whichever is higher, per bidding schedule to the National Transmission Corporation Cashier. Complete set of Bid Documents may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat/MMS, Administration Division, SLO&M, San Vicente, Brgy. Laguna.

The National Transmission Corporation assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The National Transmission Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality or defect therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

TRANSCO-South Luzon's other requirements are posted at the DBM Website: www.dbm.gov.ph

(PDI-July 21, 2005)

(Sgd.) R. B. VERGARA
Chairman-BAC



PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Philippines MCPO Box 2102 Tel. No. 893-6001/1320

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

ENGAGEMENT OF DOWNHOLE VIDEO LOGGING SERVICES FOR WELLS TO BE WORKED-OVER IN LGPF, MGPF and SNGPF In 2005 - 2006 (EDC-05-053)

The Approved Budget is US\$234,000.00 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is One (1) year

Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o N.A. Nicolaisora) starting July 21, 2005 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: One Thousand Five Hundred (P1,500.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on August 8, 2005, 10:00 a.m. at 1st Floor Building 5, PNOC-EDC, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor Bldg. 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila, not later than 2:00 p.m. on August 30, 2005 and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

(PDI-July 21, 2005)

BAC CHAIRMAN

Canadian ballet teacher to hold workshops

THE DANSE School, in cooperation with the Embassy of Canada and the National Ballet School of Canada, is bringing Canadian master dance teacher Teresa Randall to Metro Manila for a series of dance (classical ballet) workshops for teachers and students. "Engage in Dance workshops" aim to enhance teachers and students' technique in ballet performance.

Teresa Randall was trained in England as a scholar of the Royal Academy. Performer, teacher, and choreographer, she worked with the Royal Ballet (UK) and the Royal Swedish Ballet. She has studied the methodology of dance at the Bolshoi and the National Ballet School of China. She has successfully run her own studio and brings with her a vast knowledge of teaching both students and adults. She currently teaches at the National Ballet School of Canada. "Engage in Dance" will be from July 29-31, 2005 at The Danse School, 30 Balimbing Street, Valle Verde I, Pasig City. For inquiries and more details, please contact 6712630 or 6712616.

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- PC device trouble shooting ability
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- MCSE, CCNA, RHCE License will be a plus

Database System Analyst

- College or University graduate
- Hands-on good skill in SA Database access, MSSQL, MYSQL
- Candidates must be experienced with designs of computer process
- Strong analytical skill

On-line Sales & Marketing Representative

- College or University graduate
- Good command of English
- Basic computer operation skill required
- Experience in consumer goods in multinational company will be a plus
- Strong Sales skill
- Organized and independent worker who has a great team spirit

Interested and qualified applicants will be interviewed by Mr. Steve in office from 1:30-2:30 p.m. Please send up-to-date resumé in English with latest photo to e-mail: Steve@twmese.com and Copy to E-Mail: esteken@yahoo.com.tw

Address: Unit 23-B of Chatham House Condominium, Herrera corner Valero, Salcedo Village, Makati City.
Tel. No. 843-5377

WANTED IMMEDIATELY Metal Fabricator Estimator

Qualifications:

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- College Graduate / Under Graduate
- Know how to use office software
- w/ Pleasing personality

Interested and Qualified Applicants will be applied personally at NORTH STAR

#100 San Rafael Street, Mandaluyong City
Tel. # 532-3056 to 59 / 532-5622

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that the Alien Certificates of Registration (ACRs) and Certificates of Residence for Pre-arranged Employment (CRPEs) of Mr. RICARDO LUIZ BOETTCHER and dependents namely: MS. MARGRID WRASSE BOETTCHER & EDUARDA WRASSE BOETTCHER with c/o address at Philip Morris Philippines, Manufacturing, Inc. 27th Floor Enterprise Center, Tower I, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, issued by the Bureau of Immigration, Manila have been lost.

(PDI-July 8, 15 & 21, 2005)

Going from a Good to a Great CEO

THE FUTURE of Philippine business will be largely determined by the quality of its top leaders. These leaders need to think strategically—search for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the environment, make sense of the chaotic scenario. They must constantly manage change, attract and retain the best talent, grow new leaders, keep their stakeholders happy and build a competitive organization.

The Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) and the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) have partnered to create a forum to present real stories of real companies from successful CEOs and accomplished corporate leaders. This pioneering CEO Summit will be held on Aug. 4, Thursday, at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel, from 8 am to 5 pm.

Participants will have a full day of peer-learning and discussions of first hand experience, approaches and practices used in particular leadership challenges. Led by a recognized CEO and facilitated by a senior HR leader, each topic will be discussed with case studies, best practices and research results. Participants will also undertake a self-assessment of their leadership profile and how they stack up with other Asian and global business leaders.

The top of mind issues for CEOs that the summit will address are: The CEO's role in today's highly competitive business environment; the profile of successful Filipino business leaders; strategic thinking and long-term planning; ensuring leadership continuity and succession; attracting, motivating and retaining the best talent; engaging stakeholders and optimizing their contribution; and managing in difficult times.

Among the confirmed speakers are Atty. Ricardo Romulo of Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura, Sayoc, de los Angeles, Simon R. Paterno of Credit Suisse First Boston and the Management Association of the Phil., Edgar Chua of Pilipinas Shell, Dr. Rolando Hortalaza of Splash Corporation, Bienvenido Bautista of Universal Robina Corp., Rex Drilon of Ortigas and Co., and Edna P. Franco of Ateneo CORD.

For more information, please contact the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) at pmmap@pmmap.org.ph, tel. 726-1581 or 726-1532 or the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) at mapsec@globenet.com.ph, tel. 751-1161 or 751-1152.



PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

PDIC Ayala Extension Office, R/L Administrative & Special Services Department
7th Floor, SSS Bldg., No. 6782 Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St., Makati City 1226
www.pdic.gov.ph

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed bids will be accepted on July 26, 2005 (not later than 10:00 a.m.) at the PDIC Bidding Room, 9th Floor, SSS Building, No 6782 Ayala Ave. cor. Rufino St., Makati City for the sale on "AS IS" basis of the following real estate properties of closed banks under liquidation by PDIC. Prospective buyers are enjoined to inspect the following listed properties and to determine the unpaid real property taxes thereon before participating in the public bidding.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE/TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
PACIFIC BANKING CORPORATION				
pabc-05-07-1	La Union	500 sqm., residential lot with improvement, Brgy. Lingsat, San Fernando	TD 01-030-61233 ^{EE}	800,000.00
pabc-05-07-2	Las Piñas	280 sqm., residential lot, BF Almanza	81892 ^{AB}	1,760,000.00
pabc-05-07-3	Benguet	2,100 sqm., residential lot, Tacay Rd., Pinsao Proper, Baguio City	11761 ^C	5,250,000.00
RURAL BANK OF BUGALLON				
bugallon-05-07-4	Pangasinan	300sqm & 25 sqm., residential lot w/ improvements, Poblacion, Aguilaf	TD 1023 ^{ACF}	150,000.00
PAIC SAVINGS AND MORTGAGE BANK				
paic-05-07-5	Rizal	570 sqm., residential lot, Maharika Hills Subd., Brgy. Dolores, Taytay	T-554589 ^B	1,425,000.00
paic-05-07-6	Rizal	782 sqm., residential lot, Maharika Hills Subd., Brgy. Dolores, Taytay	T-554589 ^{AB}	1,798,600.00
THRIFT SAVINGS & LOAN ASSOCIATION				
thrif-05-07-7	Nueva Ecija	240 sqm., residential lot, Villa Angelina, Sta Cruz, Zaragoza	NT-22005 ^{OF}	48,000.00
thrif-05-07-8	Nueva Ecija	328 sqm., residential lot, Villa Angelina, Sta Cruz, Zaragoza	NT-22005 ^{1AB}	72,160.00
HOMEOWNERS SAVINGS AND LOAN BANK				
homeslb-05-07-9	Rizal	276 sqm., residential, L-2, B8, Ph2, Grandvalley Subd., Angono	593248 ^B	496,800.00
homeslb-05-07-10	Rizal	196 sqm., residential, L-17, B34, Grandvalley Subd., Angono	567549 ^B	352,800.00
homeslb-05-07-11	Rizal	135 sqm., residential, L-26, B1, Grandvalley Subd., Angono	560875 ^B	270,000.00
homeslb-05-07-12	Rizal	11,883 sqm., rawland/subdivision lot, Sitio Mamungban, Antipolo City	274595 ^B	891,225.00
homeslb-05-07-13	Benguet	290 sqm., residential, Outlook Drive, Baguio City	63304 ^{AB}	348,000.00
homeslb-05-07-14	Nueva Ecija	443 sqm., residential, San Jose Sur, Cabanatuan City	92579 ^{AB}	88,600.00
homeslb-05-07-15	Pangasinan	261 sqm., residential, Brgy. Bactad, Urdaneta	185653 ^B	130,500.00
homeslb-05-07-16	Bulacan	270 sqm., bank premises and commercial lot, Barrera St., Poblacion, Baliuag	T-71375 ^{CD}	9,330,150.00
FIRST PESO BANK				
fpeso-05-07-17	Pampanga	1,431 sqm., residential lot, Bo. San Mateo, Arayat	168560 ^{CF}	143,100.00
fpeso-05-07-18	Pampanga	420 sqm., residential lot, Dulong Santol, Porac	179383 ^{BF}	63,000.00
fpeso-05-07-19	Pampanga	168 sqm., residential lot, San Agustin, San Luis	181259 ^{BF}	16,800.00
fpeso-05-07-20	Tarlac	1,292 sqm., residential lot, Bo. Maliwalo, Tarlac City	122464 ^{CF}	387,600.00
fpeso-05-07-21	Rizal	300 sqm., residential lot, Kay Babae, Brgy. Delta Paz, Antipolo City	53829 ^{BF}	120,000.00
fpeso-05-07-22	Rizal	300 sqm., residential lot, Kay Babae, Brgy. Delta Paz, Antipolo City	53830 ^{BF}	120,000.00
fpeso-05-07-23	Rizal	296 sqm., residential lot, Kay Babae, Brgy. Delta Paz, Antipolo City	53831 ^{BF}	130,240.00
TG BANK (RURAL BANK SAN PABLO CITY, INC.)				
snpablo-05-07-24	Laguna	314 sqm., residential lot, Brgy. Sta. Catalina, San Pablo City	T-48753 ^{BF}	75,360.00
snpablo-05-07-25	Laguna	344 sqm., residential lot, Brgy. Sta. Isabel, San Pablo City	T-48681 ^{BF}	144,480.00
snpablo-05-07-26	Laguna	623 sqm., residential lot, Brgy. San Rafael, San Pablo City	T-57737 ^{BF}	809,900.00
snpablo-05-07-27	Laguna	180 sqm., residential lot w/ improvements, Brgy. San Lucas I, San Pablo City	T-55778 ^{BF}	108,000.00
snpablo-05-07-28	Laguna	180 sqm., residential lot w/ improvements, Brgy. San Lucas I, San Pablo City	T-55779 ^{BF}	108,000.00
snpablo-05-07-29	Laguna	108 sqm., residential lot, Brgy. San Marcos, San Pablo City	T-42971 ^{CF}	75,600.00
RURAL BANK OF CANLON CITY INC.				
rbcanlon-05-07-30	Negros Oriental	522 sqm., bank premises in commercial land Corner J.P. Rizal St. & A. Mabini St. Poblacion, Canlao City	T-445 ^{ABF}	574,200.00
ALL ASIA BANK CORPORATION				
aasiacor-05-07-31	South Cotabato	172 sqm., residential lot, Barrio Marbel, Koronadal	T-15176 ^{AC}	206,400.00
CRB DALAGUETE (CEBU), INC.				
crbdalugete-05-07-32	Cebu	416 sqm., residential, Poblacion, Dalaguete, Cebu	TD 22516 ^{ACF}	100,200.00
CRB PANDAN				
crbpandan-05-07-33	Antique	606 sqm., commercial lot with building, Bagumbayan, Pandan	TD 005-0223 ^{AC}	344,150.00

A - occupied by informal dweller/former owner
B - consolidated
C - unconsolidated
D - w/ Deed of Assignment in favor of the bank

E - untitled
F - with unpaid taxes

Each bid proposal shall be accompanied by a deposit equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the bid in the form of cash or Manager's Check only payable to PDIC for the account of the named closed bank. Bid forms and copies of the Conditions of Bid may be secured from the above-cited PDIC address. For further information, interested bidders may call telephone number 841-4000 local 4729, 28 or 31.

The winning bidder shall undertake the responsibility to acquire and maintain peaceful possession and enjoyment of the property without seeking the assistance of PDIC.

PDIC reserves the right to sell any of the properties at anytime on or before July 28 if such sale is in the best interest of the closed banks. In case of occurrence of flood, storm or other natural calamities that may result in the cancellation of holding the public bidding on the published date, such public bidding shall be held on the next working day.

R/L ROPOA DISPOSAL COMMITTEE

(PDI-July 14 & 21, 2005)



THURSDAY,
JULY 21, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B7

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HERITAGE PARK
FORT BONIFACIO
Funeral Home and Crematory
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OBITUARIES

NICASIO P. DIZON

*Peacefully joined his Creator
on 16 July 2005 at the age of 72.*

His loving wife LILY; children Joselito, Madeline, Nicasio Jr., Norman, and Mervin; daughters-in-law, Pamela and Jessica; grandchildren Margaret Nicole, Nathan James, and Jasper Alec; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the St. John Bosco Parish (Charity Chapel), Makati City.

Interment will be on Saturday 23 July 2005 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 8:30 a.m. Holy Mass.

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die."

JESUS TENEDERO SAROL, SR.

*Peacefully joined his Creator,
his loving wife Belinda and his son Nestor
on July 18, 2005 at the age of 70.*

His loving children Raymund and Joy, Aying and Lilen, Nano and Bhel, Bernard and Marte, James and Josie, Ricky and Arlene, Manny and Jhing, Epet and Eddie; grandchildren Niña, Jay Roy, Jlyn, Janina, Jonard, Alko, Vinnie, Marvin, BJ, Chan-Chan, RR, JJ, Katkat, Charles, Leila, Pam and Joaquin, Ambey; brothers, sisters and relatives request the pious readers to pray for his eternal repose and everlasting happiness.

His remains lie in state at Marian Memorial Chapels, Marcos Highway, Antipolo City and will be moved to Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Church in La Milagrosa Village, Marikina at 1:00 p.m., July 22, 2005.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 23, 2005 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Church.

SK BENEDICTO S. POSADAS

**Former Grand Knight, Knights of Columbus Council 6085
President, Parish Pastoral Council, Christ the King Parish,
Project 7, Quezon City**

*Peacefully joined his Creator
on July 19, 2005 at the age of 72.*

He will be missed by his loving wife Venus; children Arthur (†), Chito and Jo, Cristy and Junjie, Gigi, Cecile and Abner; grandchildren Derick, Rina, Denise, Nika, Carlo, Tricia, J, Sasha, Brian, Rama and Liam; brothers, sisters, relatives and friends.

His body lies in state at the Resurrection Chapel, Sta. Maria della Strada Church, Katipunan Ave., Quezon City until the afternoon of July 22, 2005. He will then be transferred to the Christ the King Parish Church, Project 7, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 23, 2005 at the Eternal Gardens, Quezon City, after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

"Well done, good and faithful servant... enter into the joy of your Master."

Matthew 25:23

ANDREA "AGGUNAY" MALING CASTAÑEDA

*of Talalang, Balabalan, Kalinga and Bontoc, Mountain Province
peacefully joined our Creator on July 18, 2005 at the age of 90.*

Her bereaved husband Lorenzo Alabanza Castañeda; children Melba and Romy Camarillo, Johnny and Elo Castañeda, Ray (†) and Doming Castañeda, Delia and Bombing Gutierrez, Hilda and Daniel Peckley, Rita and Raul Dannang; grandchildren; great grandchildren; and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Acacia Chapel, Funeraria Paz-Sucat, inside the Manila Memorial Park on Gov. Santos Avenue, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Sunday, July 24, 2005, at the Manila Memorial Park after the 8 a.m. Mass.

ISABELO YRANO SUPETRAN

*Peacefully joined our Lord
on July 19, 2005 at the age of 95.*

His loving wife Rosita Conlu Supetran (†); children Virgilio C. Supetran and wife Ninfa, Ernesto C. Supetran and wife Dolores, Erlinda Supetran Valaquio and husband Silvestre, Nena Supetran Divinagracia (†) and husband Daniel, Alfonso C. Supetran and wife Lourdes, and Gloria Supetran Ruiz Gutierrez and husband Rodolfo; grandchildren, great-grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence in Jagnaya, Jamindan, Capiz.

Interment will be at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 24, 2005 at the family mausoleum in Jagnaya Catholic Cemetery.

The Board of Directors, Officers & Employees of
ATOM CHEMICAL CO., INC.
condole with the family of the late

ISABELO YRANO SUPETRAN

Chairman of the Board

who peacefully joined his Creator on July 19, 2005 at the age of 95.

His remains lie in state at his residence in Jagnaya, Jamindan, Capiz.

Interment will be on July 24, 2005 at the family mausoleum in Jagnaya Catholic Cemetery at 10:00 A.M.

*"I am the Resurrection and the Life,
he who believes in Me will live
even when he dies and no one who lives
and believes in Me will ever die."*

Nenita Mendoza Venegas

Past President Lioness Club 301-D2
Born: January 29, 1925
Died: July 19, 2005

Her loving children Melody & Victor Barranda, Ramoncito & Emelinda Venegas, Dominador Jr. & Marilou Venegas, Maria Lourdes & Laureano Benitez, Jr.; grandchildren Trina & Abe, Glen & Gary, Karen, Jacqui & Franco, Vernon, Vanessa, Vina, Arizza and Jeremy; brother, sisters, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, the 23rd of July 2005, at the Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, Tandang Sora, Quezon City, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Sto. Domingo Church.

BUSINESS

China growth surged 9.5% in H1

SHANGHAI, China—China's huge economy grew by a blazing 9.5 percent in the first half of 2005, surging ahead despite efforts to ease breakneck growth, the government said Wednesday.

The growth rate held steady from last year, falling by just 0.2 percentage points from the same period in 2004, the National Bureau of Statistics said.

Total gross domestic product between January and June reached 6.7 trillion yuan (\$811 billion), it said.

Supporting the fast growth was gains in exports and a resurgence in investment in construction and factory equipment, which rose 28.8 percent in June over a year earlier, compared with year-on-year increases of 28.2 percent in May and 26.5 percent in April.

The statistics bureau gave a somewhat conflicted interpretation of the growth figures, saying the economy was developing in the "expected direction of macro-regulation and control," and that "the overall situation is good."

uation is good."

Yet it described the rebound in capital investment as "unreasonable."

Regulators have been tightening credit and limiting lending for investments in property development and a number of booming industries, hoping to relieve strains on energy supplies and transport and achieve a more sustainable growth level.

However, spending at the local level has remained strong. Efforts to boost coal production and electricity output, to help meet surging energy demand, also have kept growth high. Investments in coal mining grew 82 percent in June over a year earlier.

A 31 percent rise in exports in the second quarter of the year compared to the same quarter last year also boosted growth, Hong Liang, an economist with Goldman Sachs, said in a research note.

"The strength in exports seems to be feeding through to the rest of the economy," he said.

Although the economy shows little sign of slowing down, the monthly figures can be deceptive, as domestic economists believe data earlier in the year underestimated the pace of growth, said Chen Xingdong, an economist with BNP Paribas Peregrine in Beijing.

China's economic data is notorious for its inaccuracy, and local authorities often adjust their reporting for political purposes.

"Don't take the monthly figures too seriously," Chen said.

Growth in nominal terms, not adjusted for inflation, has slowed more significantly. And fixed asset investment, which represents actual spending, is not an indicator for future growth, he noted.

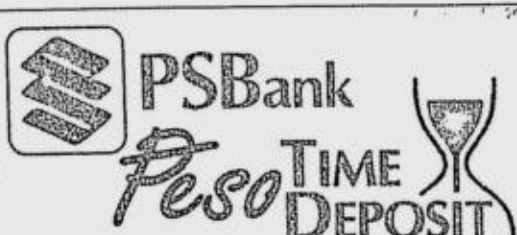
The Chinese government has set its growth target for 2005 at between 8 percent and 8.5 percent.

Although growth has remained far above that level, inflation—which had surged last year—appears to have decelerated. AP



THE US dollar firmed against the Japanese yen in Asian trade Wednesday as investors expected US Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan to signal a steady US economy when he speaks to Congress, dealers said.

AFP PHOTO



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500,000 - 999,999	5.375	5.500	5.500	5.625
1.0MM - 4,999,999	5.625	5.875	5.875	5.875
5.0MM - 9,999,999	5.750	6.000	6.000	6.000
10 million and up	6.000	6.250	6.375	6.500

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\$63 A SHARE

Unocal backs improved \$17-B Chevron offer

PHILADELPHIA/SINGAPORE—US oil producer Unocal Corp. endorsed a sweetened \$17 billion takeover offer from Chevron Corp., preferring it over a higher bid from China's CNOOC Ltd.

Chevron, the second-largest US oil company, raised its stock and cash bid to \$63 per share, up from roughly \$60 a share, turning up the heat in an international battle for assets amid soaring world demand for crude and record oil prices.

The increase was meant to combat CNOOC's efforts to wrest Unocal away with a bid of \$67 a share, or \$18.5 billion.

"Our increased offer has been driven by competitive circumstances," said Chevron chair and chief executive officer David O'Reilly in a statement.

Unocal's board, which previously favored the Chevron offer partly because of concern US regulators would reject the CNOOC trans-

action, recommended shareholders accept the sweetened Chevron offer.

CNOOC said it remained "comfortable" with its existing \$18.5 billion bid and believed its all-cash offer had a "distinct advantage."

Industry sources said the Chinese firm would hold a meeting in Beijing later on Wednesday.

Chevron upped the cash component of its offer to 40 percent from 25 percent, paying a total of \$7.5 billion and issuing 168 million shares.

Unocal shareholders will get \$27.60 in cash and 0.618 of a Chevron share for each Unocal share.

Unocal shares rose 17 cents to \$64.99 in Tuesday trading, a 3.2 percent premium over Chevron's offer price but down 2.7 percent from a record high \$66.78 a week ago when speculation about a bidding war was rife.

CNOOC's shares initially rose 2.2 percent to HK\$4.75 in Hong Kong trading on Wednesday but later pared gains to trade at HK\$4.675.

"The Unocal board of directors recommends that Unocal stockholders vote in favor of adopting the Chevron merger agreement, as amended, at the special meeting of stockholders scheduled for Aug. 10, 2005," a joint Unocal-Chevron statement read.

CNOOC's overture had sparked concern among US politicians that a sale of Unocal to a Beijing-controlled company would harm US national energy security.

The Chinese government owns 70 percent of CNOOC.

The US House energy and commerce committee will hold a hearing on CNOOC's bid for Unocal on Friday, on the heels of a congressional hearing last week where the Chinese offer came under attack. Reuters

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Manila-Visayas	2,920	2,482
Manila-North Mindanao	3,263	2,774
Manila-South Mindanao	4,523	3,845
Visayas-Visayas	1,832	1,557
Visayas-North Mindanao	2,118	1,800
Visayas-South Mindanao	3,607	3,066
North Mindanao-North Mindanao	1,145	973
South Mindanao-South Mindanao	2,462	2,093

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2GO

HP to cut 14,500 jobs

NEW YORK—Hewlett-Packard announced a major reorganization Tuesday that would slash the workforce of the technology giant by 10 percent, or 14,500 employees, by the end of next year.

The move comes on the heels of a similar move by technology rival IBM, which now estimates its job reductions will total 14,500, up from an earlier estimate of 13,000 when it announced its overhaul.

The HP program is "designed to simplify its structure, reduce costs and place greater focus on its customers," the Palo Alto, California, company said in a statement, pegging its annual savings at some \$1.9 billion.

"After a thorough review of our business, we have formulated a plan that will enable HP to begin delivering its full potential," Mark Hurd, HP's chief executive officer and president, said in a statement.

Hurd, the former CEO of NCR Corp., who took the helm of HP from predecessor Carly Fiorina in March, built a reputation for restoring NCR through cost-cutting.

"The work starts today," Hurd

said on a conference call. "We can perform better, for our customers and partners, our employees and our shareholders, and we will." Hewlett-Packard is one of the world's information technology behemoths, with revenue totaling \$83.3 billion for the four fiscal quarters ended April 30.

About half the savings of the program will be used to offset market forces or will be reinvested "to strengthen HP's competitiveness," with the remainder flowing to operating profits.

The majority of job cuts will come in support functions, such as information technology, human resources and finance.

The company did not provide a geographic breakdown of the jobs reductions, but said a voluntary retirement program would be offered to long-serving staff based in the United States.

"Today's announcement is one more example of how badly the computer sector is struggling. Among the largest job-cut announcements this year, two have come from computer firms," said John Challenger, chief executive officer of the consulting firm Challenger Gray and Christmas. AFP

Haier drops Maytag bid

NEWTON, Iowa—Chinese appliance manufacturer Haier America and two investment partners are ending their bid to buy rival Maytag Corp.

Maytag said in a statement late Tuesday that Haier America, a subsidiary of Haier Group Ltd., had informed it that the company and partners Bain Capital and Blackstone Group would no longer pursue their bid.

Maytag did not release the Haier letter and company spokesperson John Daggett declined further comment Tuesday.

On Sunday, rival appliance maker Whirlpool Corp. also jumped into the bidding for Maytag with a \$1.37 billion (1.15 billion euro) offer.

Newton, Iowa-based Maytag disclosed last month it was considering a preliminary \$1.28 billion bid from Haier America and the investment firms that valued Maytag at \$16 per share.

Haier Group is China's largest appliance manufacturer, producing refrigerators, laundry ma-

chines, dishwashers and small appliances.

The offer from Michigan-based Whirlpool, the nation's largest appliance maker, values Maytag stock at \$17 per share.

In May, Maytag's board accepted a \$14-a-share proposal from an investment group, Triton Acquisition Holding Co., led by Ripplewood Holdings LLC.

Maytag, the nation's third largest appliance manufacturer, has been squeezed in recent years by increasing steel and fuel costs, intense competition from Asian companies and slipping profitability.

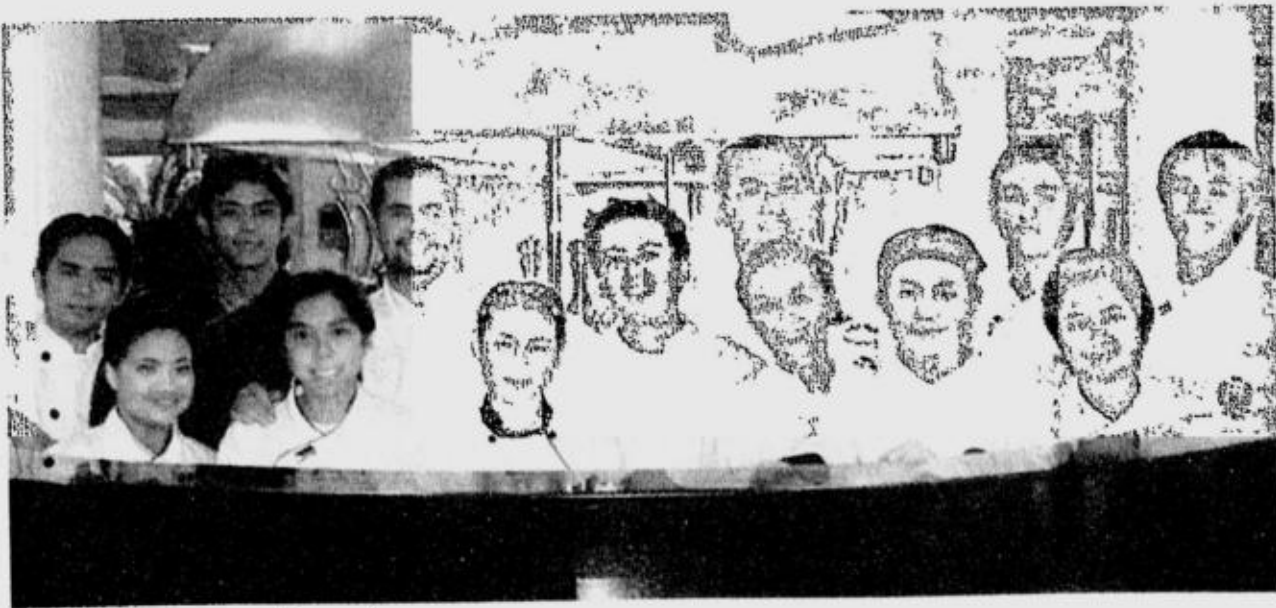
The company produces appliances under several brand names, including Amana, Jenn-Air, Jade, Dixie-Narco and Hoover.

Haier, which is based in the eastern Chinese city of Qingdao, was one of the first Chinese companies to expand internationally, setting up factories in Algeria, Mexico, Iran and Southeast Asia before it opened its first US factory, in Camden, South Carolina in 2000. AP

LIFE STYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY 2BU • THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY



TEAM Humphrey is ready for action



ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRANO

Orange peel and other kitchen remedies

TODAY, Kitchen Rescue is all about food that excites and food that heals.

Exciting food first! Not many sunsets ago I wrote about chef Humphrey Navarro's P-45. The wait is almost over. On Tuesday, July 26, the restaurant unveils itself to the public. Almost certain to be one of the best fine-dining destinations in the metropolis—that's the delightful prediction made by everyone who knows food and is aware of Humphrey's talent. For reservations, text 0917-8906865.

Home remedies

I believe in home remedies, the old style of curing common aches and pains, especially the Chinese way. Do you have recipes for food or tonics that can be made from common household ingredients?

LILITH S.

I, myself, am in awe, and believe in the powers of Chinese medicine. Luckily, I have students who helped me put this list together. For their wealth of knowledge, I'd like to thank Fe Ong, Alice Nocom, Cheryl Yu, Judith Tiu, Jennifer Go and especially Maritess Lee for sharing all they know and their secrets, especially those from herbalist Chung-Man Mak, our source for these recipes.

I've not tried them, though, and going through the whole roster of recipes makes it impossible for me to pick out which ones to feature. So here are some of the easier ones to prepare, using more common ingredients. I threw in some peculiar ones as well. Let me know if they work for you. However, these recipes do not substitute for medical attention and if you wish to get yourself treated the Eastern way, you must first consult a qualified Chinese doctor or herbalist.

For the ingredients, go to a Chinese grocery. There are many in Greenhills, the more complete ones, though, are in Aranque Market and Chinatown.

Orange Peel Tea

(Cures bad breath, common flu, arteriosclerosis and hypertension. If taken frequently, improves skin and relieves constipation.)

57 g orange peel
1 c hot water
Soak orange peel in one cup hot water for 10 minutes. Drink as often as you wish.

Chicken Soup

(Good for the kidney, energizes the body; and for insufficient sperm production, low sex drive and impotence.)

2 eggs
152 g chicken meat
8 g fennel seeds
8 g cumin seeds
4 g Sichuan peppercorns
2 slices of ginger
2 c water
Wrap seeds in muslin cloth to make spice bag.

Boil two cups water with spice bag until liquid is reduced to one cup.
Remove spice bag, add chicken.
Break eggs over boiling stock and poach.
Serve once a day with meals for three consecutive days. Consume everything.

Peppercorn Soup

(Expels phlegm, warms the body and helps aid to weight loss.)

19 g Sichuan peppercorn
57 g white part of spring onion
2 pcs bean curd
75 g chicken meat
2 c water
1 tsp oil
Crush peppercorns. Add two cups water; boil 20 minutes.
Strain peppercorns; reserve stock.
Heat one teaspoon oil and stir fry chicken.
Add spring onion, bean curd and chicken meat to stock. Simmer.

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras



Season with salt. Serve thrice a day with meals.

Pork Soup with Green Papaya

(Strengthens kidneys, stimulates lactation and enlarges breasts! Before you get excited, after age 18, this is less effective and best consumed by adolescents if the purpose is breast enlargement.)

1 green papaya, sliced
113 g pork ribs
38 g sweet almonds
Few slices of ginger
½ spring onion
10 c water
Salt to taste
In a pot, put 10 cups of water and all the ingredients except papaya.
Boil 30 minutes over high heat.

THE POWER/C3

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ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a razor-sharp mind. You see relationships where others do not. Because of this, you appear to be a genius at times. You adore new, exciting experiences and concepts. You're a natural leader. Close relationships give you happiness. The year ahead might be one of the best years of your life! Lucky you.

Birthdate of: Robin Williams, actor; Jon Lovitz, actor; Marshall McLuhan, author/media analyst.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today's Full Moon makes your conversations with authority figures (parents, teachers and bosses) a bit tense. Cooperation does not come easily. Therefore, bide your time and be patient.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Problems related to travel, publishing and education continue to get worse. Fortunately, after today, they will get better! Keep the faith.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Lumberjack

7 Feliciano or Ferrer

11 Beseech

14 borealis

15 Russian range

16 Tin Man's tool

17 Dismal

18 Points of pens

19 Open container

20 Ames and Koch

21 Banana skin

22 River deposit

23 Miller and Jillian

25 Book datum

26 Lascivious gander

27 Recently stolen

28 Pulls a gun

29 Weighty

30 In matched pairings

32 Farm enclosure

33 Summer solstice

38 Snake-like fish

39 "The _ of the Sierra Madre"

40 Bar-code swipes

43 Nolan and Meg

44 Handle clumsily

45 Related

46 Gordon and Goldblum

47 Misfortunes

48 Lethal weapons

49 Skip over

50 Magnetite or hematite

51 In addition

52 Aroma

53 Peaks

56 Travel stop

57 Chart toppers

58 Elongated

59 Blackguard

60 Bump into

61 Takes care of

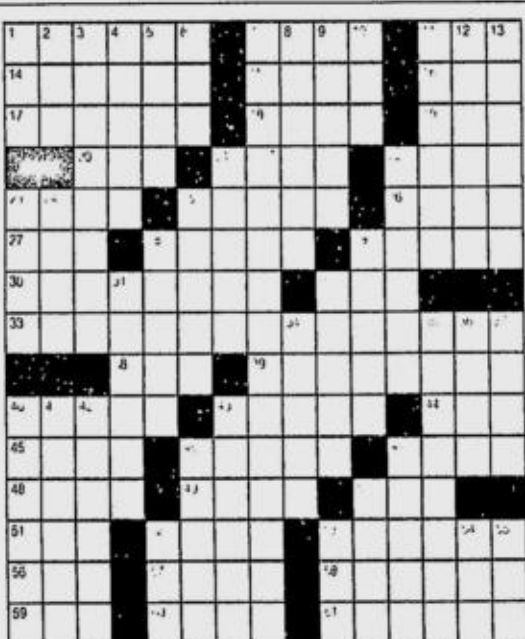
DOWN

1 Young bloke

2 Sharer's pronoun

3 Herbal beverage

4 Prods

By Josiah Breward
Scranton, PA

6/21/05

Monday's Puzzle Solved

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5 Goes wrong
6 Shaft of light
7 Summer solstice
8 Bay windows
9 Weasel-like mammal
10 Ernie of the PGA
11 Infants
12 Banishes
13 Ruling class
21 Spinnet or grand
22 Biases
23 Sailor's call
24 "And Then There Were..."
25 Fairy-tale villain
28 Medicinal portions
29 Flat-top hills
31 General directions
32 Hammer parts
34 Political payoff
35 Double housing units
36 Large inland sea
37 Trees for bows

40 Kind of electricity
41 Eclipse
42 Nut that gets slivered
43 Distant
46 Foster of films
47 Dancing Castle

50 "The Andy Griffith Show" lad
52 Unit of resistance
53 Capone and Smith
54 Have dinner
55 Overflow letters

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You have a lot of energy to work today. Nevertheless, you will likely meet with opposition. Don't worry about this. Cooperation is more likely by tomorrow.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Parents must be patient with children, and perhaps vigilant for their welfare. (A slightly accident-prone quality is present because of today's Full Moon.) Stay alert!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Domestic tension and family difficulties could occur today because of the Full Moon. However, it's likely to be very minor stuff. Just keep the peace.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is definitely an accident-prone day for your sign. Take extra care when driving, walking, jogging or cycling. Today's Full Moon might make you distracted or hasty.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Try to be patient about financial matters today. Today's Full Moon brings money matters to a head for your sign. The good news is that these difficulties will diminish by tomorrow.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Today's Full Moon is in your sign. This makes you a tiny bit obsessed about getting your way or doing what you want to do. (There's a fine line between strong and pushy.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Today's Full Moon could introduce stress where you work. Just go quietly forward. Keep your head down and your powder dry. (Minimize conflicts.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Don't get too excited about a difference of opinion with a friend or a group. The Full Moon today aggravates this situation. In fact, you can achieve harmony or agreement if you wait a day or two.

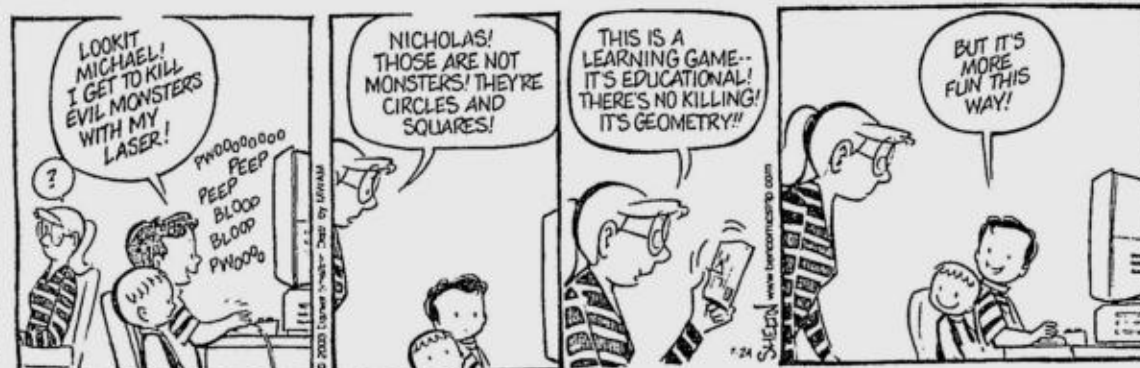
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LOVEKNOTS

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TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



Just say 'no' to coercive sales reps

CONCERNED consumer Alvin Landicho is asking for advice on what the public can do if they are victimized by a foreign-based insurance company that is using "coercive" sales strategies.

"Many people are beginning to be afraid to let family members walk around the malls (where) this group is preying on shoppers. Is there any way people can protect themselves from this kind of sales tactics?" he asked.

To explain what he meant by "coercive tactics," Landicho sent a copy of a recent story on the company's selling schemes by the Philippine Information Agency (PIA).

PIA said, "The company uses promos and giveaways to entice shoppers who hold credit cards into their shopping mall office. There, they tell (the shoppers) that... to qualify for the promo, they must surrender their cellphone and sit through a seminar. Once they agree, they are locked in a room with high pressure salesmen who do not allow them to leave until they charge a non-refundable deposit of as much as P10,000 on their credit card... They will do anything just

to sell. Once they trap you in that room, there is no getting out until you sign away your credit card."

The company's modus operandi was exposed by the media in the past, the PIA story disclosed. Eventually, the Securities and Exchange Commission investigated the company for coercing shoppers to buy pre-need plans. But the company sales reps at the malls are still as coercive as ever.

My advice to victims of this company is to ask the assistance of the consumer welfare desk of the Bureau of Trade Regulation and Consumer Protection. Call 897-7384, or write to Department of Trade and Industry-BTRCP Trade and Industry Building, 261 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City 1200.

Of course, the best way to avoid falling into the trap is to say "no" to the sales reps. Or, steer clear of them. These salespersons are easy to identify. The women wear uniforms while the men wear ties. They catch your attention by waving a sales leaflet in front of you as they engage you in a friendly sales chat. One of their gimmicks is to tell you that you've

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron



been chosen to win a very attractive prize.

Never give them your credit card. You can follow the example of the PIA writer. "Two of their agents approached us with super friendly smiles and asked us if we wanted to join (the promo game), and at the same time asked us if we had a credit card. I lied to them and told them that I had no credit card. As soon as they heard that, they turned around and walked away."

For more of the PIA report, visit www.pia.gov.ph.

Consumer protection

We shouldn't wonder at all why all kinds of scams and coercive sales strategies are rampant. There is only one ex-

planation, and that is consumer protection in this country is not given priority in our lawmakers' agenda. In my file, for example, are press releases about consumer protection bills and proposals that came to naught.

More recently, Negros Oriental Rep. Herminio Teves sought the creation of a special congressional committee to handle consumer grievances. He also called on Congress to ensure full enforcement of consumer protection laws.

Teves cited widespread violation of the rights of consumers who, according to him, "continue to suffer daily from all kinds and forms of mistreatment." Among the consumer woes he mentioned were: pricing abuses by oil firms and utilities, unwanted cellphone text messages (subscribers pay for them), excessive ATM charges and remittance fees, unreasonable surcharges on credit cards, deception by pre-need firms, lemon cars, etc.

Let's hope the proposal of Teves doesn't suffer the fate of previous consumer protection bills that fell on deaf ears.

Senior citizens' discount

Eva Espiritu of Silang, Cavite asked us to verify the information about the senior citizens' grocery discounts (June 23 column). She wrote, "I did some research on the article... (and did not see any) mention of (the five-percent special discount for senior citizens). Please check with your source of information. The discount would really help my parents."

For the information of Espiritu, the full text of the special discount for senior citizens is in the Department of Trade and Industry Administrative Order No. 03 issued April 28. The AO contains guidelines for special discounts provided for in the expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2003.

Copy of this AO is available at the local Office for Senior Citizens Affairs. For more information, I advise Espiritu to call the consumer welfare desk of DTI at 897-7384.

Send comments and complaints to mvgron07@yahoo.com.

Kiss-ing on Roces Avenue

THE CHOCOLATE Kiss Café has opened its third branch at Korben Place, Roces Avenue cor. Scout Tobias, Q.C. It offers soups, salads, local and international specialties, sandwiches and pasta, as well as cakes and pastries. Among its best-sellers are the Chicken a la Kiev, Caesar's Salad with homemade dressing, and Gamberi (spaghetti with a sauce of garlic, lemon juice, green chili, olive oil and sautéed

DINING OUT

whole shrimps). For dessert, top sellers are Devil's Food Cake, Dayap Clifton Cake and three kinds of cheesecake, with blueberry, chocolate chip, and sour cream as toppings. The café started as the Chocolate Kiss Home-baked Delights managed by Apelo sisters Alma and Maline. The Chocolate Kiss Café Roces is open 11 a.m.-10 p.m., Monday-Saturday. Call 412-7876 or visit www.thechocolatekiss.com.



VERDE Island Resort's Comida de Pastor Restaurant offers seafood cuisine in an al fresco dining atmosphere. Crusty Crabs, steamed or sautéed Filipino-style and served with rice and vegetables, is the house specialty. Verde Island is located at Barangay San Antonio, Isla Verde, Batangas City. Call 750-0466 or 750-0470.

MANILA Pavilion Hotel's Rotisserie presents Prawns Temptation on July 25-30, 12 noon-3 p.m. and 6:30-10:30 p.m. The menu includes Prawns Twister, Bloody Mary Prawn Cocktail, Mushroom and Prawn Bisque, Prawns Thermidore, A Day in Provence Prawns and Prawns Paella. Call 526-1212.

SUPER Bowl of China opened recently its newest branch in Blue Wave Marquinton, Marikina City.

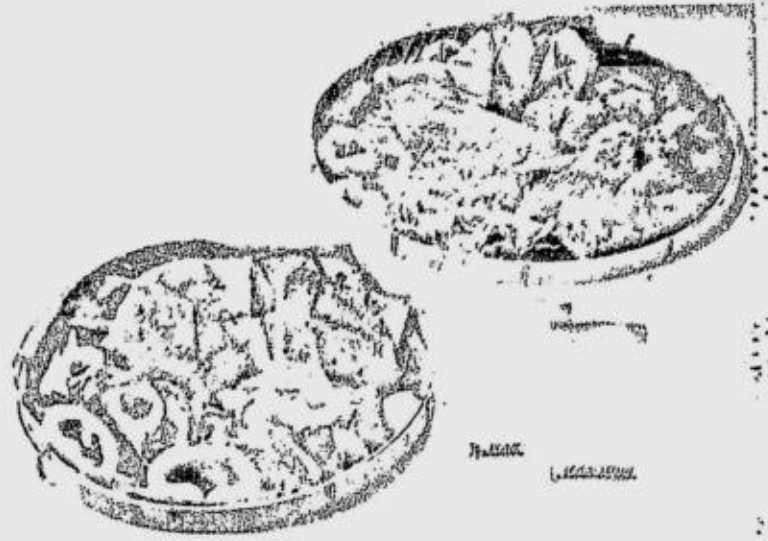
The new store offers affordable Chinese cuisine like the dimsum selection (Fresh Shrimp Dumpling, Deep-Fried Wanton); Assorted Roasts (Duck, Suckling Pig); Beef and Broccoli; Crispy Noodles with Assorted Seafood; Crispy Lemon Chicken; Szechuan Prawns; Deep-Fried Cuttlefish; Braised Seafood with Beancurd; Beef Fillet Chinese Style; Fish Fillet with Taosil Sauce; Hunan Beef; and Yang Chow Fried Rice. Super

Bowl of China also recently opened branches at The Promenade, Greenhills, and 3/L Gateway Mall, Araneta Center, Cubao.

SEGAFREDO Zanetti Espresso Bar has opened a new outlet at the 2/F Activity Center in The Podium. The café offers thin-crust Italian pizzas, fresh salads, paninis, Italian and fusion pastas, pastries and desserts. Segafredo Espresso Bar is also located at Greenbelt 2, Ay-

ala Center and Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati. Call 633-3421.

THE FRENCH Baker features Whole Wheat Croissant. It's made of whole wheat flour laminated with butter roll-in, cut into triangles, rolled into crescent shape, proofed and then baked. It contains fillings like Swiss cheese, smoked ham and deli sausages or topped with almonds and chocolate.



BACOLOD Sugbahan features Chicken Inasal, Grilled Seafood and Batchoy. The restaurant is located at Kamagong Street and Pasong Tamo, Makati; Binondo; and B.F. Parañaque.

ALL THE BEST.

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FREE UPSIZE! SHAKEY'S celebrates its 30th anniversary with a special offer. Each order of one large thin-crust Belly Buster pizza accompanied by a pitcher of iced tea may be "upsized" to a party-size pizza for free. This means savings of as much as P101. The offer is valid until July 31 for dine-in, take-out and delivery. For delivery, dial 533-8000.



Orange peel and other kitchen remedies

From page C1

Add papaya; boil another hour. Season with salt. Serve twice a week, for four consecutive weeks as one completes cycle.

Radish Soup

(Eases digestion, nausea and swelling in the abdomen.)
2 dried sour plums (red cham-puy), cut in half
300 g radish, sliced
300 g pork ribs
2 quarters dried tangerine peel, soaked in water until soft (orange peel may work as a substitute)
8 c water
Boil ingredients in eight cups of water over high heat for one hour. Season with salt. Strain and serve soup only. Drink in cases of indigestion.

Stir Fry

(For constipation, circulation and flatulence. Not good for pregnant women.)

150 g chicken meat
1 radish (good for the stomach and digestion) sliced into strips
1 eggplant (good for pain and relieves swelling), sliced into strips
1 red bell pepper
3 dried Chinese mushrooms
38 g ginger
Salt, pepper sugar, light soy—to taste
In a pre-heated wok, add oil and quickly stir fry ingredients. Season.

Congee for Hernia

(For pain, flatulence and swollen testicles.)
3 dried oysters, soak until soft
6 c water
8 g ground cumin
38 g uncooked rice

Boil six cups of water with cumin for 20 minutes over high heat. Strain.

Add rice and oyster, simmer until rice is mushy. Divided into two portions. Eat twice at different times of the day. Serve three-to-five days as one treatment cycle.

Hemorrhoid Soup

Detoxifies, regulates intestine activity and heals inflammation. The name of the soup alone makes you hungry! Hahaha!
115 g dried figs
300 g lean pork
5 c water
Combine with five cups water and simmer 20 minutes. Season with salt, serve twice a day.

For questions and comments, text 0917-8399888

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Deadline for registration is on July 23, 2005

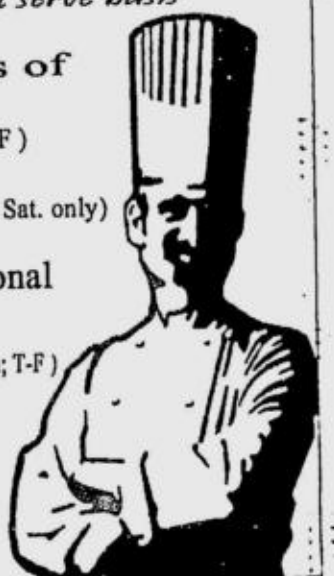


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From Touch Mobile to Touch Mobile	P 0.50
From Touch Mobile to all other cellphones and landline	P 1.50

TYPE OF CALLS	
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From Globeline Handycall to all other cellphones and landline	P 1.50
From Globeline Handycall to Touch Mobile	P 0.50
From Touch Mobile to Touch Mobile	P 0.50
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